

GIFT
JUL 19 1934



The ARYAN PATH

Vol. V.

JULY 1934

No. 7.

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51, ESPLANADE ROAD

BOMBAY, INDIA

THE ARYAN PATH

51, Esplanade Road, Bombay, India.



CONTRIBUTIONS:—Contributions submitted for publication should be typewritten, on one side of the paper only, with wide margin, and copies should be in all cases retained by the writers, as no manuscripts are returned.

The Editors hold themselves responsible for unsigned articles only. They are not necessarily in agreement with the views of their contributors to whom they leave free expression of opinion.

CORRESPONDENCE:—Letters from subscribers and readers are welcome, with criticisms, comments or questions on any subject treated in the Magazine. Questions on Theosophical Philosophy and History will be replied to direct, or if of sufficient general interest, in the pages of *THE ARYAN PATH*.

SUBSCRIPTIONS:—*THE ARYAN PATH* is published monthly. No subscriptions are accepted for less than six months, but subscriptions may begin with any desired number. All subscriptions, orders for single and back numbers, and back volumes, bound or unbound, should be accompanied by the necessary remittance to the Manager, *THE ARYAN PATH*. Price: In India, single copy Re. 1; per annum Rs. 10. In Europe, single copy 2s.; per annum £1 or equivalent. In America single copy 50 cents; per annum \$ 5; post free.

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"Psychical Research"—By H. P. Blavatsky

"Occultism in Universities"

"The Evidence of Science"

"Miracles in Kali Yuga"

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EUAS

Point out the "Way"—however dimly,
and lost among the host—as does the evening
star to those who tread their path in darkness.

—*The Voice of the Silence.*

THE ARYAN PATH

VOL. V

JULY 1934

No. 7

THE BLIGHT OF CONFORMITY

There has been a great hue and cry over the restrictions on freedom of thought in lands under dictatorships to-day. In fact, however, nowhere in our modern world are the thinking classes free. Intellectual conformity has most of them as helpless in its coils as the serpents had Laocoon and his hapless sons. Our intelligentsia flatter themselves on their liberal outlook, their emancipation from superstition, their cosmopolitanism. As a matter of fact, with very few exceptions, they are absurdly provincial mental robots. They look back with pitying contempt at the circumscribed vision of a few centuries ago, when men believed at the dictates of the church; they view with mixed amusement and disdain the more recent recrudescence of militant religious orthodoxy in the backwoods of Tennessee. Nevertheless, truly free-thinking men and women are as rare in our great centres of civilization and

culture as in the Dark Ages or in remote small towns to-day.

Mediocrities with one or several degrees have dominated Western culture these many years. The universities turn them out by the thousand, stamped ineffaceably, like coins from the mint, with the pattern of orthodox mental attitude. The university's proper function is to broaden all the minds it trains. In practice, like Procrustes, it tries to make all comers fit its bed, amputating as ruthlessly as it stretches, according to the mental stature of each comer. The university imparts information, but it clips the wings of thought. The very ideal of culture it presents is a fixed pattern, the mental attitudes it imposes as stereotyped as the formal gestures of some Indian dances. In some countries, the various fraternal organizations and women's clubs take up the task of moulding thought where the university leaves off. The price

of intellectual leadership of one's group to-day is willingness to browse in the plains with the flock, satisfied with the herbage they munch, perhaps a few feet in advance of the rest—not more. The gregarious instinct is strong and the heights, whither the flock would not or could not follow, beckon to but few. The blight of orthodoxy affects not sciologists alone and such small fry. Some of the greatest names in science to-day belong to men who have indulged in bold free thought within their own domain, but who, outside it, are not ashamed to wear the drab habit of conformity.

The extent to which mental discipline is imposed by modern culture is obscured by the existence of a limited outlying area in which the mind may lay aside its uniform and move about in mufti. Absolute conformity with orthodox doctrines was never demanded. A certain laxity around the edges always has given the illusion of intellectual freedom and saved self-esteem. Even in medieval Europe one was free to hold what views he liked on non-essentials, such as the seriously debated question how many angels simultaneously could occupy a needle's point. In our day there has been a great relaxation in standards of conduct, a scouting of long-established social sanctions, a weakening of moral fibre, perhaps most marked among many of the intellectuals themselves, the natural leaders of the throng. This liberty, run into licence, glimmers its votaries with the illusion of freedom absolute,

and such have but added the chains of sense and lust to those of intellect.

Let none imagine that the dominance of intellectual orthodoxy is less tyrannical to-day because more tenuous! Poison gas which he cannot see can choke a man quite as effectively as can a visible rope. True, modern learning has formulated no definite creed, but certain of its assumptions have all the weight of dogma. Perhaps there has never been less real tolerance. The iron hand wears a velvet glove to-day, but let a man defy the force of the views of his group and he soon feels its weight. The heretic courts martyrdom. The rack and thumb-screw of the modern Inquisition are the epithets applied to dissenters—reactionary! visionary! fanatic! Its stake is the amused tolerance or undisguised contempt of friends and kin. "Scientific freedom," for instance, is a Shibboleth which even the humane feel they must echo or lose caste, and so most resolutely turn their thoughts away from the barbarities and tortures practised in its name. Let a man raise his voice to condemn vivisection and champion its helpless victims—straightway he is dubbed "a hysterical sentimentalist". If he dares challenge the current medical superstition of serums and vaccines, he is "a dangerous crank". And let a man oppose birth control by artificial means as an abomination; let him affirm his faith that education and practice in self-control offer the only legitimate cure for the over-population evil, and he

is denounced as an enemy to society. A man may be guilty of one of these heresies and, if he keeps reasonably quiet about it, his friends may indulgently call him "unpractical," and let it go at that. But let him entertain heterodox views on several of these points—he is "quite mad, poor chap!" If his convictions go so deep that he feels constrained to urge his views on others to effect reform, he finds the utmost difficulty in gaining a hearing. The orthodox press is closed to his "vapourings"; his letters are not published, his articles, whatever their literary merit, are refused.

There are more basic concepts which self-respect, as a modern intellectual, demands that each accepts,—such, for example, as the truth of the Darwinian theory in broad outline, the inferiority of ancient views and cultures to our own, the evolution of religions from worship of natural powers and fetishes to monotheism. Some in the West find implied tacitly in the last the ultimate superiority of Christianity over other faiths; others, in East and West alike, interpret it that there is nothing sacrosanct in any faith.

The provincialism of the educated Western man is nowhere more apparent than in his bland and quite complacent ignorance about the great religions and philosophies of the East. Men who consider themselves broadly cultured feel no embarrassment in admitting that they have never heard of the *Bhagavad-Gita* or the *Zend-Avesta*. Sometimes their tendency is to be-

little them therefore, as if to imply that what they do not know is not worth knowing. Commonly the study of comparative religions is under sectarian or agnostic auspices and because it is undertaken from a great height of fancied superiority, perspective is quite lost and only the fantastic and irrelevant stand out. The ashes of dogma and superstition have hidden the fire that smoulders underneath, and those who stir contemptuously the cooling embers most often miss the gleam of living truth, common to all faiths, that once gave them life.

On the moot point of soul-survival it might seem at first blush that a wide latitude is tolerated. Some of the intelligentsia hold it probable that consciousness survives the death of the body; some, a smaller number perhaps, hold that it probably does not; a few find reincarnation an interesting hypothesis. All can exchange their views with relatively little heat. The possibility of knowledge on the point would be proclaimed absurd by one and all. If one allows a shade too much conviction to creep into his tone, someone is sure to remark, comfortably, "After all, no one knows!" And all the group are amicably upon common ground, pleased with their detachment and contemptuous of the host of simple folk outside of their agnostic circle who have the bad taste to believe or to deny. We venture to predict that even Mr. Bax's reasoned view on reincarnation appearing in this issue will be looked at askance by

many who regard conviction on anything they cannot see and touch as just a bit quixotic. To deny without a basis of knowledge is equally illogical, but this is less apparent to the modern mind, which never heard the words of Narada :—

Never utter these words ; “I do not know this—therefore it is false.” One must study to know, know to understand, understand to judge.

How many, without pretence of investigation or thought on what reincarnation means, snatch at the distorted idea of transmigration into animal forms and dismiss with a witticism the possibility of many lives on earth ! It is surprising, too, how many, bored and disillusioned with their lives, deny the possibility because, forsooth, they do not want to live again on earth. “ But I don’t want to come back ! ” If reincarnation be a law of nature, as many hold, do these poor modern Canutes think that the tide will heed their interdicts ?

Part of the unwritten Credo of Western thought is that belief in superphysical powers and forces is unworthy of serious minds. The average educated man would as soon confess to a belief in Santa

Claus, the Christmas sprite, prancing reindeer, chimney descent and all, as to belief that there might be anything in Magic but fraud or jugglery. He would think himself fit subject for a lunacy commission if he admitted any power in man not properly accredited by modern science. One step in that direction and he might find, oh, horror ! that he had opened wide the door to belief in so-called superstitions he had thought were safely bottled up like the djinn of old and sunk to the bottom of the sea.

They have been so sure of their strength, these modern minds, that they have let themselves be lulled to sleep by the blandishments of pride, as Samson yielded to Delilah’s wiles. Like him, they lie securely bound ; the Philistines of narrowness and of delusions manifold are upon them. Individuals can arise in their strength and strike the shackles from their minds, but they must recognize first that they are bound. All honour to the few who brave the crowd ! Thrice fortunate they who can break through the vicious circle of modern influence and come up above the vapours !

WHITHER GOETH THE SOUL ?

[Below we print two articles, both dealing with the immortal nature of the Soul. The first is by the well-known biographer and playwright, **Clifford Bax**, who accepts Reincarnation because of his own intuitive perception. The other is by **K. R. Srinivasiengar** of Mysore University, who examines the theories of modern psychophilosophy in the light of ancient doctrines.—Eds.]

I.—MY VIEW OF REINCARNATION

Reincarnation is an idea which a vast majority of Western persons are not disposed to consider seriously, and the objections which people bring against it are almost innumerable. It has never taken root in the West, and perhaps it never will. Our forefathers, believing that the Bible was dictated by the Master of the Universe, naturally ignored the reincarnation-idea because, had it been true, God would presumably have mentioned it. I am aware, of course, that some theosophical writers attempted to show that the New Testament* refers to the theory twice: firstly when the disciples reported that "some say that He is Elias," and secondly when they asked whether the man, blind from birth, was suffering on account of his own sins or these of his parents; but it is said that those passages do not imply a belief in reincarnation as it is generally understood and, in view of his answers, no one could claim that Jesus maintained the idea.

In these days not many people disregard a belief because it is not sanctioned by the Bible. In these

days, on the other hand, most people reject the reincarnation-idea simply because they do not believe that there is anything which could reincarnate. Now, since I want at the present moment to explain my attitude toward this ancient idea, it is obvious that if I had first to explain why I think that the soul exists, I should never come to my theme at all. I must therefore take for granted that, in one way or another, we do survive death; and I ought to add that I speak about reincarnation with no authority and shall give merely my own view of the matter.

II

First, then, let us see why it is that a good many persons are instantly attracted by the theory. Well, there are people, foolish but sometimes also charming, who respond to it because they immediately use it to fan their self-importance. How many Cleopatras, how many Napoleons, are walking among us, unrecognised! Once, too, I met a man, well-known in the newspaper world, who confided to me that he was "Shakespeare,—

* In the U. L. T. Pamphlet No. 8—*Reincarnation in Western Religions*—three papers are reprinted—"Reincarnation in Judaism and the Bible," "Reincarnation in the Bible" and "Christian Fathers on Reincarnation". All of them are by W. Q. Judge.—Eds.

resting". It is much less often that we come across anyone like a certain other man, a more modest creature, who informed me that he had been eaten to death by rats during the French Revolution: to which, I regret to say, he added that I had been responsible for his gruesome end but that he had long since forgiven me. The reincarnation-idea, as we all know, is a forcing-house for fantasies, and the absurdity of our Cleopatras and Napoleons does much to bring it into disrepute.

Some people, again, conclude that reincarnation is a fact because they have had a vision or a dream—I have had such a dream, myself,—which carried with it all the feeling of a vivid recollection: or it may be that they have known the experience which Rossetti recorded in the lines:—

I have been here before,
But when or how I cannot tell:
I know the grass beyond the door,
The keen sweet smell,
The sighing sound, the lights around the shore.

An experience of this kind may be impressive enough to make us feel morally certain that we must have been to some place, or have encountered some person, in a previous life: but it will probably not be long before a wiseacre assures us that we get this peculiar sensation of "knowing it all" simply because there are times when one lobe of the brain functions a little bit later than the other lobe. There is, so far as I am aware, not the slightest evidence for this assertion but, having a scientific flavour, it satisfies many people. At least we

find here a first warning that almost any experience may be interpreted in a dozen ways.

There are, too, other persons, of more exacting intellect, who adopt the reincarnation-idea because, taken together with the twin idea of karma, it seems, better than any other doctrine, to render the crossword puzzle of life almost intelligible. And lastly, there are people who recognise that the idea is true as soon as they hear of it, and who are unable not to believe it. Occasionally, even, children will discover it for themselves.

III

Leaving aside all those who "do not believe in the soul" and who therefore cannot take any interest in the reincarnation-idea, what are the most usual objections which people advance against it? There are many—most of them based upon misconceptions of the theory—and I can instance only a few. One man may feel that it is absurd to conceive that the entire personality of George Brown or Nancy Green will persist indefinitely. Another may declare that nobody has really recollected a past life, and that if all of us have lived many times, then humanity as a whole would not be unconscious of the fact. A spiritualist might contend that if reincarnation were true, then the spirits and controls who speak through mediums would triumphantly announce the truth. And finally, a great many people assume that the idea must be only an oriental dream because it was put forward so long ago and

in pre-scientific times. They feel that all sound knowledge began with Darwin, that pre-Darwinian thinkers were necessarily playing only with day-dreams and guess-work, and that no modern person need pay much attention to the ideas of anyone who could never have heard of evolution, psycho-analysis or the ductless glands.

IV

Even if it is true, reincarnation would of necessity be almost impossible to prove intellectually. Supposing, for example, that a child (as seems to have happened in India) were to recall events in the family-life which occurred before his birth? Even such evidence can be explained in various ways. I know a school-girl, born during an air-raid, who is obsessed by a terror of war and by a dread of being poisoned. This looks like a memory, but it would convince no critic. I know another school-girl who, when she was about seven or eight, used to tell her father (a distinguished man) that she had been in the great war. She went so far as to describe some of the cities in the French war-zone. Her father, who was once as good a sceptic as anyone could wish for, received a planchette-message that his daughter had been an officer in one of the Yorkshire regiments and had been killed in action. The father then asked the little girl what kind of clothes she wore when she was in France; and, after describing a khaki uniform, she said "There was a funny thing, just here. It was like this." She

next began to scribble and suddenly, while she was doing so, she exclaimed "I know! It was a Tudor rose." Here again a careful or obstinate critic would suggest that telepathy between the father and the daughter might account for the whole incident. And it might, but that does not prove that telepathy is the true explanation.

It is, in fact, only if we conceive that an entire personality passes intact through the major operation of death and back again into life that we shall expect much evidence of this kind: and from the little that we can learn or surmise concerning the after-death adventures of the soul, it seems clear that when it enters a new set of conditions it loses more and more of its terrene characteristics. Our minds are made very largely by our circumstances; and another "world" would change us more thoroughly than any mere sojourn, however long, in another part of the familiar earth. Indeed, the best advocates of the reincarnation-idea suggest that, between one life and another, the soul (or whatsoever we choose to call the persisting principle) gradually sheds more and more of its earth-won knowledge, memories and peculiarities until, finally, it succeeds in extracting an essence, as it were, from its experience of life. The idea in its best form, then, does not imply that Virgil, for example, would return to this world as a perfect replica of the Roman poet, but rather that the mind which was once Virgil would return with the

same essential tendencies. In this connection, too, we shall do well to consider the bold idea which figures in Geraldine Cummins's automatically-written book, *The Road to Immortality*. In this book we find a statement that the souls of people are not sharply separated, as their bodies are; that every person is a part of a group-soul, somewhat as a number of cells make up a physical organism; and that after death each soul becomes slowly reabsorbed into the group-soul with which it has an affinity. Leonardo da Vinci, therefore, may have been only the most effective representative of a group-soul which includes, let us say, a thousand persons. If this were true, it would be seldom that any one soul would recollect the details of any particular life in the past.

The only other way in which we could prove that reincarnation is a fact would be to see it in action, and this, manifestly, would be an achievement of the utmost difficulty. Theosophical writers used to declare that, as a rule, there is an interval of about fifteen hundred years between one life and another. Buddhists, I understand, maintain that there need be hardly any interval at all: and indeed, under different time-conditions, a soul after death might well pass through a thousand experiences in what we can only call a moment. Everyone knows how much may be experienced in a moment of mere sleep. Whether the interval is long or brief, a very high state of vision must be necessary before anyone can actually

perceive the operation of a law which extends from life to life and across the abyss of death. And here we dispose of the spiritualist's objection: for we have no ground for supposing that death makes anyone more capable than he was during life of detecting so profound and intricate a process.

V

For most of us, therefore, reincarnation must remain a philosophical idea. We cannot prove it, as a physicist can prove the law of gravity, because we lack the necessary equipment: but gravity was at work in the world a very long time before men apprehended it intellectually, and reincarnation may have affected millions of people who were quite unaware of it. Why, then, would some of us, having so little evidence (if indeed we have any), be willing to say that we believe reincarnation to be a truth? Well, perhaps it is only a physical fact which can be demonstrated to the contentment of every sane person. I think that there are some ideas which ring true upon the mind. I think it more than probable that many truths about ourselves and the universe around us can be apprehended only by intuition or that sense of truth which, in my judgment, we possess. I would no more attempt to satisfy another man's intellect that we continually go to and fro between death and life than that, if he were more sensitive, he would understand why some people derive deep happiness from fine poetry. Reincarnation is an

idea which seems either true or unthinkable. In addition to this feeling of its truth, we have, for what they are worth in argument, our sense of familiarity with certain historical periods or even with certain places which still exist. And lastly, if we are satisfied that the soul will survive death, we may wonder how it fares on the further side of that change, and ask ourselves whence came the souls that are for ever trooping through the archway of birth, and come to the conclusion that nothing could be

more in keeping with the processes of nature than that the souls of the newly-born should come from the world of the dead,—even as the soul, when its body is broken or outworn, passes, in our belief, from this world into another where it digests the experience of life, smoothes out the many creases of memory, becomes for an instant something mightier than any single personality, and then, recreated by this purging, returns to pursue its everlasting purpose of apprehending truth and of manifesting love.

CLIFFORD BAX

II.—THE MIND-BODY PROBLEM IN RELATION TO HUMAN SURVIVAL

Various theories have been held regarding the nature of mind and its relation to the body. Neo-Realists of all types generally accept *emergent evolution* as the *modus operandi* of Nature. This is fast becoming a favourite dogma in contemporary thought. It declares that on a basic framework of matter (Lloyd Morgan) or space-time (S. Alexander) higher and yet higher entities, not predictable before, “emerge” from a new and effective form of relatedness of the elements of the previous stage, *e.g.*, space-time, electronic charges, atoms, molecules, biocules, life, mind, reflective thought. Morgan, however, explicitly states that though there is emergence *in* mind of higher and yet higher levels of perception and consciousness, there

is no emergence *of* mind from that which is no wise mental.* At every level of the pyramid of evolution, there are psychical correlates to the physical emergents, and it is out of such rudimentary “other than physical” factors that mind as we know it emerges at last at the stage of vital relatedness.†

In Alexander’s theory of mind, which is also Neo-Realistic, space-time is the matrix of the whole gamut of evolution, and even at this basal level time is spoken of as the “mind of space.†” This means merely that “alike in the matrix of finite things and in all finite things there is something of which, on the highest level we know of finite existents, mind is the counterpart or correspondent” and which performs “to them the

* *Mind at the Cross-ways*, pp. 172, 26-28.

† *Space, Time and Deity*, Vol. II, p. 38.

† *Ibid.*, p. 51.

office of consciousness to our brains.”* And in the organism in which mind has fully emerged, although the mental and the physical processes are identical, “mental process is . . . something new, a fresh creation,”† a new quality acquired by a neural process of a certain level of development.

It has always seemed to me a matter for some surprise that in the West philosophers in general, unlike Eastern thinkers, should have founded their conclusions solely on facts of normal life and waking experience (*jāgrat*) and ignored dream-life (*swapna*), deep sleep (*sushupti*), and supernormal phenomena generally (*turiya*). It is only recently that two eminent thinkers, one a psychologist, Dr. McDougall,‡ and the other a philosopher of Cambridge, Dr. C. D. Broad, have thought psychical and supernormal phenomena worthy of serious discussion in scientific and philosophical works. Dr. Broad, after a prolonged study of mediumistic phenomena, observed both in personal experience and in the recorded evidence of eminent and unimpeachable authorities, concludes that something which possesses some of the attributes of mentality survives the death of the body and is able to relate itself to the mind of a living person, *i. e.*, to possess the body of the medium.

Mind as such, however, does not survive.§

This something Dr. Broad calls “the psychic factor”. It possesses only some of the attributes of mind and persists only for a certain period after the dissolution of mind and body.¶ Mind as we know it is an emergent upon a combination of this psychic factor and a bodily factor. This is what Dr. Broad calls the “Compound Theory” of mind which is a modification of the theory known as “Emergent Materialism” (that mind emerges purely from a physical basis). On this theory all that we need suppose is simply that the persisting “psychic factor” combines with the material organism of the medium to form “a little temporary mind or ‘mindkin,’”** or that it combines with a series of organisms to form a successive series of minds (in the case of metempsychosis ††).

The recognition of a “psychic factor” which persists after death and which is able to unite with a living organism is, it will be admitted, a very great step taken by contemporary thought in the direction of unravelling the mystery of mind. But why does not Dr. Broad pursue further this persisting “psychic factor” and discover its necessary implications and conditions?

* *Space, Time and Deity*, p. 44.

† *Ibid.*, p. 7.

‡ *Modern Materialism and Emergent Evolution*, Chapter IV. McDougall, a severe critic of Watsonian behaviourism, concludes, on a survey of the facts of memory and psychical research, that mind has a non-spatial, *i. e.*, immaterial, organisation and though it may manifest itself through the medium of a material organism, it is not in its own nature bound down to any such organism.

§ *The Mind and Its Place in Nature*, Chapter xli. ¶ *Ibid.*, pp. 540-541. ** *Ibid.*, p. 540.

†† *Ibid.*, p. 551.

Mr. C. E. M. Joad has pointed out that if mind is supposed to be emergent upon a combination of a psychical and a bodily factor, it cannot escape traces of the materiality which has gone to its making. This means that it would then be impossible "to maintain the sharp distinction between mind and brain, that is, between mind and body, upon which as vitalists we must insist."* And since Dr. Broad maintains this distinction,† his theory of mind's emergence would result in a fundamental self-contradiction.

Further, if the "psychic factor" in Broad's theory is the residuum left behind after the dissolution of mind and body, it cannot exist prior to the mind (and Dr. Broad does not say that it does); but in that case with what does the bodily factor combine in order to produce mind? The same difficulty arises in connection with the bodily factor.

Again, the "psychic factor," *ex hypothesi*, is not material for Dr. Broad. If what we know as mind can according to him exist only in conjunction with a body, how can something which is less than mind "persist" even "for a time" or "at intermediate times"‡ without it? What becomes of it finally? If it is destroyed, what is meant by saying that an immaterial entity is destroyed? If it continues to exist, how does it exist, what kind of life does it lead? And how is an immaterial something able to unite with the material body of the

medium?

If only Dr. Broad had studied authentic Theosophical works like Madame Blavatsky's *The Secret Doctrine*, I feel sure he would then have perceived that the "psychic factor" which is said to persist for a time after the death of the body is really what is called in Theosophy the Astral Body, *Linga Sharira*, Design Body. He is right in thinking that it is not a mind but that "it may carry modifications due to experiences which happened"§ to the individual while alive. But then it is not entirely different from matter, for it consists "of matter of very fine texture as compared with the visible body, and has a great tensile strength" and possesses an "elasticity permitting its extension to a considerable distance. It is flexible, plastic, extensible, and strong. The matter of which it is composed is electrical and magnetic in its essence.¶"

And yet since "sub-conscious perception and latent memory" are located in it, "it retains all the memories of the life lived by the man, and thus reflexly and automatically can repeat what the dead man knew, said, thought and saw".** As, however, it is devoid of mind and conscience and spirit, it has no independent knowledge of its own real state or surroundings to impart, and this explains Broad's observation that the dead men, alleged to communicate with the living, are singularly reticent about their present life, occupations, etc. After the death of the physical

* *Matter, Life and Value*, pp. 162-163. † *Op. cit.*, pp. 438-439. ‡ *Ibid.*, pp. 540-541.

§ *Ibid.*, p. 540. ¶ W. Q. Judge, *The Ocean of Theosophy*, p. 39.

** *Ibid.*, p. 42.

body, this "Astral Body" is released and "becomes the shell of the once living man and requires time to dissipate".*

If then the "Astral Body" is not mind or the basis of mind, what is? It seems to me that a synthesis of the elements of truth in Alexander, Morgan and American Neo-Realism is necessary in order to arrive at the Eastern view of mind. If the "neutral stuff" of American Neo-Realists is interpreted as the space-time of Alexander, then this same space-time is the Ultimate Reality for Esotericism as well (but in a higher sense than Alexander's†). But the emergence of mind (Madame Blavatsky employs the phrase, "the emergence of consciousness"‡) is to be interpreted not in Alexander's or Broad's sense as the emergence of an *absolutely new* quality, but in Morgan's sense as the emergence of higher levels of consciousness from rudimentary psychical factors. And it must once for all be understood that in Esoteric as well as in Indian philosophy generally, there is no radical distinction between mind and matter, life and non-life, like that usually held in Western thought. This, however, requires a qualification, lest it should be interpreted behaviouristically to mean that thought is a form of brain secretion. Says Madame Blavatsky:—

Spirit (or Consciousness) and Matter

are, however, to be regarded, not as independent realities, but as the two facets or aspects of the Absolute (Parabrahm), which constitute the basis of conditioned Being whether subjective or objective.§

I am not sure whether Occultism would accept the psycho-physical parallelism of Spinoza, or the similar doctrine of universal concomitance of Lloyd Morgan, or "the panpsychism" of J. A. Thomson.¶ In one place at least Madame Blavatsky writes that "every physical point is but the phenomenal expression of the noumenal, meta-physical point."*** This is, however, more a Leibnizian tenet and the following extracts probably may reveal the heart of Esotericism much better on this question of the relation between mind and matter.

It may be correctly stated that were Leibnitz' and Spinoza's systems reconciled, the essence and Spirit of esoteric philosophy would be made to appear. From the shock of the two...emerge the truths of the Archaic doctrine. Both opposed the metaphysics of Descartes. His idea of the contrast of two substances—Extension and Thought—radically differing from each other and mutually irreducible, was too arbitrary and too unphilosophical for them. Thus Leibnitz made of the two Cartesian substances two attributes of one universal unity, in which he saw God. Spinoza recognised but one universal indivisible substance, and absolute ALL, like Parabrahman. . . . There was but ONE for Spinoza; for Leibnitz an infinitude of Beings, *from*, and *in*, the One. Hence, though

* *Ibid.*, p. 42. For further details regarding this body and its part in séances, *vid.*, *Ocean of Theosophy*, Chapters v, vi, xvi and xvii.

† *The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. I, pp. 35, 37.

‡ *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 15.

§ *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 15.

¶ "That all the objects of our experience have two aspects . . . mental as well as material, physical as well as psychical." (*Contemporary British Philosophy*, p. 325.)

*** *The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. I, p. 630.

both admitted but *one real Entity*, while Spinoza made it impersonal and indivisible, Leibnitz divided his *personal* Deity into a number of divine and semi-divine Beings...

Now, if these two teachings were blended together and each corrected by the other,—and foremost of all the One Reality weeded of its personality—there would remain as sum total a true spirit of esoteric philosophy in them. (*S. D.*, I, pp. 628-629).

This sum total she analyses into "the impersonal, attributeless, absolute divine essence" on the one hand, and "the as invisible, yet comprehensible Presence (*Mulapra-kriti*) . . . from which evolve the numberless hierarchies of intelligent *Egos*, of conscious as of semi-conscious . . . Beings, whose essence is spiritual Force, whose Substance is the Elements and whose Bodies (when needed) are the *atoms*."

Mind then exists throughout Nature and this accords well with Morgan's conception.* Says Madame Blavatsky:—

Descartes denied soul to the animal, Leibnitz endowed, as the Occultists do, "the whole creation with mental life, this being, according to him, capable of infinite gradations." (*S. D.*, I, p. 627).

"And this," she continues, quoting from J. T. Mertz's *Leibnitz*, "at once widened the realm of mental life, destroying the contrast of *animate and inanimate matter*; it did yet more—it reacted on the conception of matter, of the extended substance" (I, p. 628), showing that matter is in its essence nothing but mind.

Mind then does survive the death both of the physical and of the Astral Body or Linga Sharira. If materiality "persists" why should not mentality "survive"? For according to Esotericism, mind (*Manas*) is connected with two immortal principles, discernment (*Buddhi*) and Spirit (*Atma*) forming the Immortal Triad in man. Hitherto, of course, psychic research has not been able to reveal the existence of anything higher than the persisting Astral Body; but I am convinced that it is only through the study and development of the higher psychic powers of man that the true nature of man can be realised, and not through the study of what passes for scientific psychology in our modern universities.

K. R. SRINIVASIENGAR

* *Mind at the Cross-ways*, p. 26.

CONFUCIUS AND THE MODERN STATE

[E. Dora Edwards, D. Litt., of the School of Oriental Studies in London, was Reader in Chinese at the University of London in 1931. She writes of China from intimate experience, having lived for six months in Peiping and for over six years in Manchuria.

World conditions to-day resemble the state of China when Confucius began his lasting work of reform. Then as now the world was in a hopelessly chaotic condition, and many thought the end had come. But Confucius arose and a new cycle opened in China. His motive for action is well revealed in the following :—

“ One day Confucius lost his way in the country. Seeing two farmers working in the field, he sent one of his disciples to inquire the road. The two farmers, who were hermits, insulted the disciple and criticized Confucius for being so restless in his endeavour to get into office and to improve existing political conditions. One of them said : ‘ Disorder, like a swelling flood, spread over the whole empire, and who is he that will change the State for you ? ’ Then the farmers continued to work, paying no further attention to the questions put to them. When the disappointed disciple related to Confucius what had transpired, Confucius remarked sorrowfully : ‘ I cannot associate with birds and beasts. If I associate not with my fellow-beings, with whom shall I associate ? If peace and order were prevailing in the empire, I would not care to change it. ’ ”

And the method ? He “ searched the Scriptures ” and harking back to his illustrious predecessors transmitted the Wisdom of the Ages. “ I only hand on : I cannot create new things,” he said. “ I believe in the ancients and therefore I love them.”—EDS.]

At the end of the last century the pressure of Japan and the West compelled China to recognise the existence of a great and different world beyond the limits of the Middle Kingdom. So long as she had slept, secure in the rightness of the old tradition and incredulous of anything better, the old order continued in spite of internal dissensions and dynastic changes. But as the events of the nineteenth century more and more disturbed her security, a number of her leaders became convinced of the need for reform. Even before 1900 Chang Chih-tung had pointed out the importance of the study of international law and political science; military reforms were undertaken about the same time;

and, when the revolution of 1911 occurred, bodies of well-trained troops were found on both sides. Similarly educational and juridical reforms were inaugurated, largely through the influence of K'ang Yu-wei; but the most sweeping change was the official promulgation in 1905 of a projected new form of government. This envisaged the representation of the people after a preparatory period which would come to an end in 1917. But the situation developed rapidly. Growing knowledge of the mechanised, scientific west, of new and various political systems, of modes of thought entirely strange, spread dissatisfaction with the tardiness of the proposed changes, and the Manchu house, unable to enter the

promised land, gave place to the republic in 1911.

When revolution broke out, it was neither a popular movement nor the direct consequence of agitation. From 1895 Sun Yat-sen had worked steadily to bring about a rising, but his attempts and those of other reformers failed. Popular support was lacking, and, when rebellion came, it flared up as the result of the injustice of the government towards certain railway shareholders in the distant province of Ssü-ch'uan. The proposed reforms, which had been first of all political, economic and social, had neither interested nor touched the vast rural population, which indeed even to-day remains politically inert. Old bottles cannot contain new wine, as the leaders of the reform movement came to realise, and they therefore began to plan the psychological reconstruction of the nation.

But the revolution did not really place China in the hands of the reformers: she swiftly fell under the power of the war-lords, with whom the welfare of the country was second to their own interests. Unrest was still further increased by the numerous parties and factions which formed a confused and ever-changing political background to a succession of civil wars. Out of this welter of dissension emerged one party which was to prove itself stronger than the rest. As soon as the republic had been set up, the revolutionary group which had supported Sun Yat-sen's efforts to overthrow the Manchus resolved

itself into the People's, or Nationalist, Party (Kuo min tang). As the largest and most influential group in the parliament of 1912, it inspired the drafting of a constitution, and was the bitterest opponent of Yüan Shih-k'ai's presidential policy though Sun had been responsible for his appointment. Part at least of the strength of the Nationalists appears to have lain in the fact that from the beginning they have had a definite constructive policy. Externally they seek full recognition of China's equality with other nations; while so far as the internal situation is concerned their declared programme is the overthrow of militarism and the betterment of the masses. The introduction into China of the communism which has marked the left wing since about 1923 when Sun Yat-sen fell under the influence of Soviet Russia, forms no part of the official party programme; and the death of Sun in 1925 may well have relieved the Nationalist leaders of a burden. But even the most strenuous opponents of the living politician did not fear to place in the hands of the whole Chinese people as a sacred book the full text of the lectures in which Sun, whose death was followed by his immediate apotheosis, elaborated his three principles of national liberty, political equality and economic brotherhood. These he explained as amounting to "government of the people, by the people, for the people," the meaning of which is, he said, "that the nation is the common property of all the people, that the government is administered in common by

all the people, that the profits are enjoyed by all the people in common." He added :—

According to that theory not only will the people be communistic in regard to the state, but everything else will be in common. When the people have everything in common in regard to the state they will truly have attained to the "great commonwealth" so ardently wished for by Confucius.*

Of these three principles only one was entirely strange to Chinese thought. Theoretically, at least, the Confucian ideal included the principle that the people is the state, and governing meant acting for the benefit of the people. But, while Sun Yat-sen advocated equal political rights for a people stirred to national consciousness, neither Confucius nor his school envisaged a state other than one in which the masses were kept ignorant of the art of governing. What Confucius desired to see was an educated class governing not by means of punishment but by the force of example, and a people trained to follow the example thus set. It is not possible, as some writers attempt to do, to reconstruct the ancient Chinese system of government in terms of modern political thought. On the other hand there is no doubt that the Confucian concept is that of the modern idealist, who looks upon the state not only as a legal but also as an ethical and moral institution. Confucius conceived the state in its political, social and ethical aspects as an organic whole,

and advanced theories always in accordance with this view. The earliest, purely family stage of government was breaking down, and a new stage was gradually being evolved out of the chaotic conditions of the time. This new stage represented what has been called "an autocracy superimposed on a democracy". Until the end of the Manchu dynasty the family remained the unit in the social and economic structure of the empire, while politically a highly centralised administrative system was developed. The function of government was largely protective. It maintained an army; it administered criminal law through its various grades of magistrates; and in return it levied and collected taxes. For the rest, control was vested in heads of families and in village headmen or groups of village elders, while economic authority rested with the guilds, through which commercial law was largely administered.

As has been pointed out by one Chinese writer,† Confucius did not formulate any ideal system of government. Forms are outgrown as society develops, and are never universally satisfactory, but in so far as the purpose of government is to adjust the relations between society and the individual, certain principles may be laid down which are universal and permanent. Confucius was no revolutionary, but neither was he as conservative as Lao Tzū. He recognised the inevitability of the change that was

* D'Elia, S. J., *The Triple Demism of Sun Yat-sen*, p. 476.

† Liang Ch'i-ch'ao *Political Principles of Confucianism*, p. 83.

taking place and knew that "inaction" and "non-interference" were words no longer effective. Yet it was to save the old ideals from extinction that he travelled from state to state, making himself unpopular by his efforts to persuade the princes that the new "autocracy" should, and could, be built up on the same fundamental principles as had actuated the rulers of China's "golden age". This was the "great commonwealth" so ardently wished for by him—an economic and ethical Utopia and not a political democracy.* The theory advanced in relation to ancient India† that the state existed to uphold *Dharma*, that is, to maintain the moral order and the social equilibrium, and that all must accept their place in the scheme of things in order to improve that place at each rebirth, has only a limited counterpart in Chinese thought. The religious aspect is entirely absent, and the end is the present good of the state (the people as a whole) and not that of the individual hereafter. But the careful adjustment of human relationships by means of that untranslatable quality "*Jen*" which is in effect social virtue (*man's humanity to man*) and "*li*," the outward and visible sign of this inward grace, are at the root of the Confucian concept of the state. Those fitted to rule are those in and by whom these two qualities are most clearly displayed; and it is the duty of the king as the re-

presentative of the state to discover such men and promote them to office. Thus the state is not an external force, driving each to do his part in achieving social harmony, but is itself the harmonising element. "The king is the wind and the people the grass; when the wind blows over it the grass must bend," may have more than one interpretation.

In the view of Confucius, harmony, or social solidarity, could no longer be induced by non-interference. New conditions demanded new methods, and social harmony was possible only when the five relationships were correctly adjusted. And these, he held, had not only ceased to be self-adjusting, they were no longer even understood. "What is needed is to rectify names!" he exclaimed. We speak of the five relationships of prince and subject, father and son, husband and wife, brother and brother, friend and friend, but now, though the terms are still used, their true connotation has departed; when a man has killed his prince we still speak of prince and subject, though one or the other, according to the justice of the deed, must have forfeited the name; similarly, even when father and son are lost to the relationship which should exist between them, we still speak of father and son; and so it is with the essentials of the whole social structure; we say what we do not mean and

* The text upon which Sun based this appeal to tradition has long been questioned by Chinese critics, even if the communistic interpretation given to it by him were not entirely unfounded. See D'Elia, *op. cit.* 233, n.

† R. Pratapagiri, "Nature and Sphere of the Ancient Indian State," *Journal of the University of Bombay*, July 1932.)

have "the name without the reality"; the first requirement for the restoration of the state to its former excellence is to rectify names,—such was his argument, and indeed there can be no true reconstruction upon a foundation of confused thinking.

The special emphasis which Confucius laid upon man in his relation to man left small place for individualism. This may explain in part the rapid spread and the extraordinary influence of Buddhism in the centuries following the official adoption of what came to be known as the Confucian system of government. Western ideas concerning the rights of the individual, particularly as interpreted by Sun Yat-sen, have had much to do with the veneration in which the revolutionary leader is held and the wide influence which his teachings have gained in China. "In no sense a great man, he was undeniably a great force,"—words applied to Sun on the day after his death,* that might, with equal truth, be spoken

of Confucius. Sincerely convinced of the special nature of his mission, and undaunted by the impossibility of his self-imposed task, each sought in his own way the welfare of his people. It is as yet too early to form any adequate judgment of Sun for it is not possible to foretell what will be the effect of western socialistic and communistic theories superimposed on Chinese ideals and modes of thought. One thing is certain; the introduction of revolutionary principles is not in itself sufficient to change the fibre of the Chinese mind, and Sun himself, in spite of his western training and the radical difference of his doctrines from those of China before the revolution, must ever remain an example of the influence of the thought of the past upon the present. Education may do much to prepare the ground, but a nationalism built entirely upon other than Chinese foundations, if not foredoomed to failure, must seriously retard the progress which China so ardently desires.

E. D. EDWARDS

* *North China Daily News*, 13th March, 1925.

THE SYMBOL

[In our February number was published "The First Abyss: A Chapter in Autobiography," by **Theophilus** who now writes the following sympathetic character study. It attempts an interpretation of the value of a symbol to the human heart and indirectly brings in an instance of the working of a well-known occult law.—EDS.]

Whatever reality things possess must be looked for in them before or after they have passed like a flash through the material world ; but we cannot cognise any such existence directly, so long as we have sense-instruments which bring only material existence into the field of our consciousness.

—THE SECRET DOCTRINE, I, 39-40.

She had no fear, but her pride leapt into a great flame of resentment and anger. She could find no fault in herself that might justify this stroke as a sign of judgment. It was not judgment. There was no eternal mind, no deliberation, no purpose in the universe. There was nothing but a fortuitous concurrence of atoms that in obedience to some vast indifferent law, combined and recombined into an infinity of meaningless patterns, no one of which was of greater or less importance than any other. In the beginning had been chaos and to chaos all things would in time return. And between chaos and chaos came these patterns of heterogeneity; the accidental products of differentiation; nebulae and incredibly great stars; the white mass of the sun, the gross solidity of the cooling earth, the brief proliferation of a million life forms presenting, in the fugitive moments

that intervened between excessive heat and that ultimate cold of death in which all movement ceased, the delusive appearance of order and reason.

That had been her father's explanation of the Kosmos and now for the first time she saw that he had been right. Until this senseless blow had fallen upon her, she had believed in an inherent justice and mercy that endowed the universe with love and beauty.

Her life had steadily confirmed her in that belief. She had her mother's love and if she could not love her father, she greatly admired the sturdy force of his fine intellect, the pride of his magnificent assurance. He had been honoured by the world and his death had been spoken of as a great loss to mankind.

Yet she and her mother had not greatly missed him when he died. He had been a man apart from the

warm intimacies of life, courteous and kind but lost among the deep abstractions of thought into which they could not follow him. And so soon after his death, life had suddenly flowered for her into a very ecstasy of love and beauty.

She had wisely refrained from any boast, she guessed so truly the tolerant, condescending smile that would have replied to it, but she knew that the love between Andrae and herself had been of a quality different from that of her acquaintances, different from any that she had ever known. She had been aware of a curious stillness at their first meeting. When he spoke to her, his voice had seemed to come out of a great silence. She had heard nothing but his voice; had been suddenly deaf to all the multitudinous sounds of the bustling world around her. Their conversation at that first meeting had been brief and insignificant, but for her it had had an effect of unique privacy. During those uncounted moments, the remainder of the world had ceased to exist for her.

She had had a quiet certainty that they would meet again, and had waited, content and faithful, for his return. He, however, had had no such calm assurance of hope. He had been fretfully anxious to find her again, chafing at the temporary barrier that parted them. Yet when he had surmounted it, he had approached her diffidently as if unsure that she would welcome him. It was not until after they had met many times that she was able to inspire him with her own deep certainty that the rest of

their lives would unquestionably be spent together in the strength begotten of quiet and confidence.

The rest of their lives! How strange it was that she who had known so much and so truly, had never doubted that the years ahead of them would be many. Andrae had sometimes allowed fear to come into his mind, had said that such happiness as theirs was too great to last, made references to the traditional jealousy of the gods. But she had always been able to still his anxiety, giving to him out of the abundance of peace and calm in her own spirit. She had had no fear. She had believed that she was strong enough to command happiness.

And when the fatal stroke had been delivered, when, before the sacred offspring of their union had yet stirred in her womb, they had come to tell her that he had fallen, none knew how, on to the rocks and been found there with a broken neck, all her being had flared into revolt. She had not wept, nor lamented, nor stormed at fate; but all the peace of her soul had turned to anger. In an instant her faith had gone from her, and open-eyed and in a deep silent wrath she had realised the vast indifference of a meaningless universe, in which there was no eternal mind or spirit, no purpose, no power for good or for evil. Life was no more to her henceforth than an unintelligible pageant, "a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury signifying nothing". Shakespeare had known it. Her own father had known it. And now the blasting

truth had come to her, also.

For her there could be no more hope. She and the child she bore in her body were but casual aggregations of atoms among the illimitable host of atoms that clashed and warred together in one all-enclosing fantastic device. They might survive to what we know as old-age or they might be destroyed at any moment by a casual stroke of the shifting pattern. And whether they or any other human being lived or died was of no account here or for ever.

Her mother's love and pleading, the challenge to live for her child had no meaning for her. She was alone in the vacant wilderness beyond which lay nothing but the horror of Medusa's empty glare, and upon that she would gaze until her heart was turned to stone.

As the year ripened and the child began to stir within her, she sat often on the cliff from which Andrae had fallen, and watched the play of the sea. She was never tempted to kill herself. She was too proud to strike her colours, too brave to surrender before whatever indifferently brutal attack might be offered by the crass nonentity of chance. She sat very still and heaped the fires of her inward hate and anger.

She had been sitting there on the cliff for many hours when the evening came that brought her vision. No cloud had flawed the great arc of the sky since early morning. Beneath her the slow weight of the incoming tide slipped landwards in succeeding ripples so faint that the delicate music of

their sibilant advance was no louder than the midnight whisper of a restless poplar. The sun that had changed from scoured brass to ruddy gold as it drew obliquely down from the open depths of the sky, glowed at last blood-red as it touched the steel-hard line of the horizon, and the track of its reflection on the waters fell straight towards her as the stem of a gigantic letter T crowned by that glowing circle of fire.

And with the transient writing of that symbol on sea and sky, some deep, mysterious memory moved within her, some age-old association with the figure of Life. For an instant it seemed that the whispering of the sea changed to the faint melancholy music of a remote singing. But even as she watched, held motionless in a straining effort to recover that lost knowledge, the symbol changed. The sun was half-hidden now, but her imagination completed the circle and she saw it crossed by that single tense line of the sea's edge. But although that pattern, too, held some vague meaning for her, she would have rejected it in her desire to recover the earlier illusion, had not the second symbol persisted, even when the sun was hidden. For then she saw the vast enclosing arc of the sky crossed by that single horizontal line, as if the whole great universe were intent on manifesting this single sign of wonder.

Yet the hate and anger that burnt within her rejected that symbol as no more than another work of the ruling nonentity. That

effect of memory and the warm emotion that had accompanied it, were attributable, she declared, to sentiment and superstition. But as one who boasting the solidity of the material world may be startled by the tremors of an earthquake, so she who had been so steadfast in unbelief had now to fight for the recovery of her footing. And when an hour later she turned towards home and saw the full circle of the rising moon crossed by the outflung branch of a withered pine, she threw up her arm before her face as if she would hide her eyes from the messenger of God.

But in the days to come she could not forget that symbol which had been presented to her. She saw it perpetually in chance combinations of the common effects of life, in the face of the clock when the two hands were in line, in an ash-tray crossed by the stick of a match, in the plate on which she laid her knife, but most clearly of all burning in white fire against the darkness when she closed her eyes at night.

In those days she became steadily more and more aware of her own duality. On one side were ranged the forces of her intellectual scepticism, bringing with them, as she began to realise, the destroying emotions of fear, anger and hate. On the other side there was this strange, unanalysable resistance typified by a dream symbol. And presently she was asking herself why, if that symbol brought a sense of peace and quietude, she should so wilfully oppose it? Why, indeed, if the universe were no more than

a fortuitous concourse of should she deliberately choose conflict? The answer came to her intuitively. The intellectual inherited from her father, red conflict to humiliation. What use was that pride, she herself, if its only purpose was to bring division and torture?

And after that the yeast Spirit began to work more and more within her. By degrees she overcame her opposition to it, and began to open her mind to the suggestion that sprang from the great source of wisdom, acquired, though she did not as yet know it, through long ages of old experience. Sometimes she would sit motionless for hours at a time, plunged in contemplation, held by an intuition that she was on the verge of discovery, that if she continued to hold herself very still, knowledge would come to her, knowledge of the great eternal mystery for ever beyond the reach of the physical senses. And although that knowledge was still just beyond her reach, her quietness and confidence increased, calming her intellectual revolt and bringing the promise of a new unity.

She had lived ascetically for many months before her son was born, and her confinement was quick and natural. After the birth when her son had been taken from her, she lay outstretched with a feeling of vast relaxation, of peace, exhaustion. For a moment it seemed to her that she was passing into a great darkness, and then that she saw with the eyes of the Spirit, already separated

ly and looking down upon
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sought came to her. She
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g flame, the thought came
that she had been asleep
d dreamt a meaningless
She clenched her hands
lcomed the reassurance of
iliar flesh. She had been

safely delivered of a son, and
henceforth she decided he should
be her one reality. To him, she
could devote herself with a great
singleness of mind, forsaking all
perplexities as to her origin and
destiny. He should become for
her the living witness of present
reality

But when they brought him to
her, she saw upon his breast a
birth-mark impressed by her own
power of thought,—a thin red
circle crossed by a single horizontal
line. It was the writing of her
own spirit, to be for all her life to
come a perpetual witness of the
truth of her vision, a reminder
that reality must be sought in the
self and not in the illusions of the
physical senses.

For these signs have been mani-
fest from the beginning of the
world, foolishness to those whose
thought cannot reach beyond the
ever-present illusions of matter
but a pregnant symbol to the Spir-
its that in the will to conquer are
rising to the threshold of immor-
tality. To them it is given to read
the universal script that has nei-
ther meaning nor message for
those who are pre-occupied by their
consideration of worldly life.

THEOPHILUS

THE TRIUNE TEACHING OF DIVINE WISDOM

[S. V. Viswanatha, author of *Racial Synthesis in Hindu Culture* (Trübner's Oriental Series) gives here some interesting fruits of his study of the *Bhagavad-Gita* with regard to the threefold process in the imparting of Divine Wisdom. The *Bhagavad-Gita* is one of those rare books of Esoteric Wisdom, the reading of which entails the deciphering of a profound cipher. This cipher-language is said to have been "used systematically by the adepts in life and knowledge, who, seemingly giving out their deepest wisdom, hide in the very words which frame it its actual mystery". Our author attempts an explanation, using a particular correspondence which is interesting.—EDS.]

The *Bhagavad-Gītā* lends itself to classification and interpretation of different sorts; and, viewed from one standpoint, a close study of the "Song Celestial" discloses to the reader three distinct courses through which Śrī Kṛṣṇa takes Arjuna while imparting to him the Divine Wisdom:—(1) Simple Conversation (*samvādam*), (2) Divine Vision (*viśvarūpa darśana*), and (3) Personal Communion. The second appears to be an advance upon that which precedes it and a preparation for that which follows. This becomes evident, first, from the gradual change effected in the course of the teaching, in the mental equipment and attitude of the pupil. Early in the discourse (ii. 7) he is shrouded in doubt as to his duty, and waits innocent and child-like, to take the instructor's decision. In the sixth chapter (39) he admits that none besides his Teacher can dispel his delusions and doubts. As the teaching progresses, (xi. 1) and the Lord's Light is breaking in on his mind, his delusive fears vanish with the words of divine consolation spoken by the Master. At the end (xviii. 73), he characteristically exclaims that,

after the full attainment of Spiritual Knowledge (*Smṛiti*), he feels steadied and certain; ignorance and illusion linger in him no longer.

This threefold process in the imparting of Divine Wisdom is revealed in the aim and purpose of the teaching, the method adopted and the result achieved.

I

The essence of the instruction is pithily put in one verse as the preparation of the postulant to perceive, realise and enter the Eternal Light, which is impossible save by earnest and whole-hearted devotion to the Lord. "One can know, see and reach Me only by unremitting devotion to Me" (xi. 54). The first chapters of the *Gītā* are intended, no doubt, to inculcate knowledge that is "secret" (*guhya*) but of a general nature and pertaining to the physical senses (*jñātam*); and here only glimmerings of Divinity are beginning to be perceived by the pupil. In the middle portion, it is realisation of Superior Wisdom (*guhyatara-vijñāna*) taught by the revelation of the Divine Form (*draśṭum*). In the last chapters is seen to emerge the Knowl-

edge of Self (*ātma-jñāna*, xiii, 11) which is styled the only Perfect Knowledge (*guhyatama*, xv, 20, xviii, 65f), the disciple thereafter becoming one with the Master, to enter His Abode and dwell with Him in Immortality (*praveshaṭum*).

In the last three verses of the last chapter, Sañjaya, summing up the efficacy of the Teaching, refers first to the Wonderful Dialogue (*samvādam*), next to the Marvelous Form revealed by the Lord (*rūpa*), to behold which with the vision that is faultless, the pupil is endowed with the *Divya chakshus* (xi, 8) and, lastly, to the Eternal and Permanent Abode (*sthāna*) where the Master and Disciple stay united (*yatra . . . tatra*). Arjuna displays a lecturing spirit in the earlier chapters, being under the influence of a false philosophy of conduct (*prajñāvāda*), tending gradually, as a result of the teaching, to become attentive and quiet. Treating the whole *Gītā* as a dialogue between Master and disciple, it will be seen that, of the questions asked by Arjuna, about half have been exhausted by the close of the first six chapters, few of them being vital, while only a few are met with in chapters xiii to xviii. Strictly speaking, therefore, only the first third of the text can be called *Samvādam*, the succeeding divisions devoted to the other two aspects, *Rūpa* and *Sthāna*, containing more of the Master's disquisition and only a little of interrogation by the disciple.

The three-fold path—*Karma*, *Bhakti* and *Jñāna*—appears also in conformity with the principle of

division attempted here. First, Arjuna is instructed in the sacred necessity for doing his duty, without the thought of personal ends, thinking nought of gain or loss to himself. Verses 16 ff. of the fourth chapter are devoted to the nature of man's activities and duties. It is stated here that even the wise are bewildered by the multitude of opinions as regards *Karma* (right action), *Vikarma* (wrong-doing) and *Akarma* (inaction). Mysterious is the Path of Duty. Hence, the first six chapters are devoted by the Teacher to summing up his precepts on *Karma*. Next, by a course of instruction, the pupil is enabled gradually to see the Master as He really is, being gifted with the superphysical sense, and becomes devoted and obedient to Him (xii). Thereafter, he is ready to follow Him with humility, wherever he is led. Therefore, the Master unfolds to him at the end the essence of the Esoteric Knowledge (*guhyāt guhyataram* and *guhyatamam*), even superior to that beyond which it was stated in chapter vii, there is nothing greater to learn (vii, 2). Thus the *Gītā* teaching progresses from the physical to the metaphysical plane.

II

The method adopted and the qualities demanded of the student at each of the three stages appear to be different and suited to the nature of the instruction imparted. In the first chapters Śrī Kṛishṇa follows the method of simple instruction, as if to an untaught child. He exhorts Arjuna on the necessi-

ty for doing his duty, unmindful of the results. Here he drafts into service analogies and parables, with a view to bringing home to the pupil the essence and efficacy of His teaching. With the pupil who had been endowed with the eye to perceive the Truth there was not much need for the Teacher to draw such examples from outside ; hence the reader meets with only a few instances of metaphorical language in the second part of the *Gītā*. In the concluding chapters, Arjuna has become a discerning disciple, and the direct language used by the Master does indeed have a telling effect.

As regards the qualities required of the student :—Earnestness, unremitting service and steady application (*śūsṛūshā*, *abhyāsa*) are called for in the first stage ; strength of will, concentration and detachment in the second (*tapas*, *vairāgya*) ; while contrition of heart, serenity of temper, and selfless love are the special marks demanded in the third stage (*samyatātmā-bhakti*) (vi, 35 ; xviii, 67). These qualities are peculiar respectively to *Indriya* (senses), *Mana* (faculty of attention) and *Buddhi* (intellectual faculty) ; and iii, 42 says, the *Indriyas* are indeed powerful, more powerful than these is the *Mana*, and dominating both is *Buddhi*.

III

As to the effect of the teaching, after the first stage, the darkness

(*tamas*) that had enveloped the mind of Arjuna is gradually dispelled by the gradual glow of glimmering Light. Thenceforth is in evidence what may be described as a quality of *rājasa* in the temperament of the pupil which gets fired by the Teacher's mention even in chapter vii of a few of the characteristics of His *Vibhūti* (Cosmic Glory). Arjuna yearns now for a fuller knowledge of the might and mercy of the Master ; and hence, a fairly complete description of the *Vibhūti* of the Lord is given in Chapter x. This *rājasa* of Arjuna is later tempered by the dazzle of the Eternal Light and the Power of His Majesty. At the end of the teaching he attains purity (*sattva*), peace (*śānti*) and patience (*śraddhā*), the white light of the Divine having penetrated every sense (xiv, 11).

Thus are we led to the three stages through which, according to the Hindu religious belief, the postulant passes on the Holy Highway of the Divine. These are, in order, proximity, the pupil sitting at the feet of the Instructor ; the opening of his Eye to the Light ; his admission to the Bliss of Immortality ; and the Master and Disciple becoming one. They correspond respectively to "*Sāmīpya*" "*Sālokya*" "*Sārūpya*" and "*Sāyujya*," which are treated as being in ascending order of Merit.

S. V. VISWANATHA

PHILOSOPHY AND LIFE

[The place and influence of philosophy in the everyday life of the people is being discussed from different points of view, as we remarked in our last issue in publishing two articles on "Philosophy in India". C. E. M. Joad makes this interesting contribution to the discussion, indicating that the influence of philosophy on the mind of the populace is indirect. His article presses home the fact that it is time that the nature of philosophy and the function of philosophers be given fresh consideration and redefined.—EDS.]

Philosophy has, I am convinced, an important effect upon life. Nevertheless it is difficult to say in what this effect consists and how it is brought about. It is not, for instance, a direct effect resulting from an attempt to carry into practice a particular philosophical doctrine. Philosophy unlike religion does not exhort us to live a particular kind of life; it has no specific message.

We have only to look at philosophers as they can be currently observed in the West to see that this is so. The political philosopher is no better either as a citizen or as a statesman than his neighbours. The metaphysician cannot provide an agreed and demonstrably correct answer to the questions, how the universe started, whether it works mechanically, whether there is a God, or whether there is such a thing as matter. The morals of the ethical philosopher are not noticeably superior to those of the plain man. In particular he is not necessarily remarkable for what is known as the "philosophic temperament". He is no more serene, and he is not better tempered than the man in the street. A knowledge of all the ethical systems that have been propounded since man began to moralise will not make the

philosopher a good man, and thinking will certainly not make him a happy one. It is even possible that happiness and knowledge may be in some ways incompatible, so that we are still to-day faced with the choice, which the Greeks propounded long ago, between being a happy pig or an unhappy Socrates. This fact need not, however, cause distress, since the question whether happiness is the only thing which is desirable is itself a philosophical question, capable of being answered in many different ways.

One of the reasons for this apparent absence of any practical effect by philosophy either upon the individual or the world, is, it is commonly said, its failure to reach results, that is to say, results which are definite and agreed. If "results" mean a complete set of answers to all the questions that have puzzled mankind since speculation began, it must be admitted that philosophy has nothing of the kind to show. The philosopher, instead of building upon the foundations laid by his predecessor, spends most of his energy in destroying the work of those who have gone before, disputing their hypotheses and throwing doubt on their conclusions. There is no one philosophy to which all philos-

ophers will agree, as there is, for example, one multiplication table to which all mathematicians agree. Many of the disputes of philosophers are, moreover, disputes about what exactly it is that they are disputing about. Hence arises the gibe that a philosopher is like a blind man looking in a dark room for a black cat that isn't there.

Yet this charge, although in a sense it is true, is also extremely unfair. All the sciences, it must be remembered, started life as philosophy. Astronomy, mathematics, biology and physics were branches of philosophy in the time of the Greeks, and, for so long as they were purely speculative in character, philosophy they remained. So soon, however, as anything definite began to be known about them, they seceded from philosophy and became separate sciences in their own right. Philosophy is thus in the unfortunate position of a schoolmaster who must inevitably lose his pupils directly they show promise. Definite knowledge has no place in philosophy, and it is in this superb aloofness from brute fact that men have found much of its charm.

This mention of aloofness brings me to a consideration of its practical influence. This influence is exerted in several ways. Philosophy will take a common object and show us that we know much less about it than we expected. A chair, for example, which appears to common sense to be four wooden legs surmounted by a square wooden seat, can be shewn by philosophical reflection to be an

idea in the mind of God, a colony of souls, a collection of sense data, a piece of our own psychology, or a modification of the Absolute. Philosophy can give very good reasons for supposing that the chair is each and all of these things, and, although it cannot definitely prove which of them it is, it at least makes it quite certain that it is not just a chair. From this point of view the value of philosophy lies largely in its uncertainty. The man who has no acquaintance with philosophy goes through life imprisoned in the prejudices, the preferences and the habitual beliefs derived from the society in which he happens to have been born, and the period in which he lives. If he is born in Persia he thinks it right to have four wives; if in England, only one. If he is born in 300 B. C., he thinks the sun goes round the earth; if in A. D. 1900, he takes the contrary view. None of the views which he holds are the result of independent thought; all are the product of convictions which, having grown up without the consent of his reason, are merely the reflections of the conventions and prejudices of his age. To such a man the world tends to become dull and obvious. Common objects provoke no questions, and unfamiliar possibilities are contemptuously rejected. Philosophy, which raises doubts about what has hitherto been taken for granted, keeps alive the sense of wonder and restores mystery to the world. By diminishing our certainty as to what is, it enormously increases the possibil-

ity of what may be. Thus it makes life more interesting, not because of the answers it provides to the questions it raises, but because, by the mere process of raising such questions, it liberates us from the dominance of the actual and sets us on the threshold of the reign of emancipating thought.

It is here that we come within sight of the real function of philosophy, a function which philosophy can alone fulfil, and which constitutes its ultimate justification. We can exhibit it in the clearest light by drawing attention to the fundamental difference between philosophy and science.

Now philosophy may be defined as the effort to comprehend the universe as a whole; not, like physics or biology, a special department of it, but the whole mass of data to which the moral intuitions of the ordinary man, the religious consciousness of the saint, the æsthetic enjoyment of the artist and the history of the human race, no less than the discoveries of the physicist and the biologist, contribute. To look for certain fixed and definite knowledge in regard to a subject-matter of so all-embracing a character is unreasonable.

In the first place, the subject-matter is itself in a state of continual flux. It is not philosophy alone that is changing and self-contradictory; the record of science is strewn with the debris of discarded theories, and the scientific laws and formulae of one age are superseded in the next. At the moment the physicists are

presenting us with new theories about the constitution of the material universe at about the rate of one every ten years, while biology is in a perpetual state of controversy about the cause and character of the evolution of life. But more important than differences in the data about which the philosopher speculates are the differences in the minds of philosophers. Philosophy is not content to catalogue the facts; it enquires into their meaning. Pooling the experiences of the scientist, the saint, the artist, and the common man it asks what must be the nature of the universe in which such experiences are possible. It is interested, in other words, not so much in the facts as in their significance. Thus it establishes principles of selection and rejection whereby some of the facts are shewn to be important, while others are rejected as trivial or condemned as illusory; it assigns values, too, and assesses the universe in respect of its beauty or its goodness.

Now, this search for meaning and significance, this task of assessment and valuation, involves considerations of a highly personal character. We shall select according to what we think important; we shall group and arrange according to likenesses which we think significant; we shall assign values to what we recognise as beautiful or good. What we think important or significant or beautiful will depend very largely upon the sort of minds we possess, and not only upon our minds, but also upon our characters and temperaments. One

man will detect common elements where another observes only a chaos of differences; some will recognise the hand of God in what others insist to be a haphazard collection of fortuitous events. Thus, while the facts are the same for all, the conclusions which we base upon them will be different. Nor need this difference be deplored; just as it takes all sorts of men to make a world, so does it take all sorts of minds to make the truth about the world, and philosophy is no more to be dismissed because each philosopher has a different system, than morality is to be invalidated by the fact of differing moral judgments, or religion proclaimed to be nonsense because there are innumerable variations of religious belief.

The conclusions of philosophy are, therefore, uncertain because they depend not upon facts but upon the interpretation of facts; and, once we go beyond the facts and attempt to give them a meaning, we have to reckon with the element of personality. Given the same facts you and I will take different views of what they mean, simply because we are different people. Hence the uncertainty of philosophy comes partly from the largeness of the questions which it studies and partly from the temperamental considerations which must necessarily affect our attitude to these questions.

But the all-embracing character of philosophical problems, while it makes for uncertainty in the answers, is not without its effect upon the mind that studies them.

Taking the whole realm of knowledge for its sphere, philosophy deals with those ultimate problems which have troubled men in all ages since thought began. For equipment to grapple with these problems, philosophy arms herself with the most up-to-date information, including of course the conclusions reached by modern science. But the philosopher is not content with these conclusions; they are for him merely a stimulus to speculation, diving boards from which he may plunge into the sea of the unknown. His work begins, in short, where that of the scientist leaves off. In the light of the facts recorded by scientific research, he proceeds to a renewed consideration of the time-honoured problems of the ages.

Philosophy seeks to study these questions impartially, not desiring to arrive at results which are comfortable or flattering to human conceit, nor to construct a universe which is conformable with human wishes. On the contrary, it endeavours to maintain a modest attitude towards objective fact, and to discover truth without fear or favour.

Those who give time to the study of such impersonal questions are bound to preserve something of the same impartiality and freedom in the world of action and emotion. Since a consideration of fundamental questions shows us how little is certainly known, the philosopher is ready to grant the possibility of contrary views having as much or as little truth as his own. Thus philosophy generates

an attitude of tolerance which refuses to make the distinction between right and wrong, good and evil, truth and falsehood, identical with that between the things done and the views held by the self and the contrary actions and thought of others.

Finally, the fact that no agreed answer has yet been discovered to the most fundamental questions cannot but suggest to the honest thinker that all systems hitherto constructed are in some degree false. Those who have no tincture of philosophy are inclined on all questions not susceptible of proof to supply the place of knowledge by converting other people's conjectures into dogmas. The philosopher, on the other hand, will admit that even his so-called knowledge is conjectural, and regard fanaticism, bigotry and dogmatism not only as an offence

against manners, but as a betrayal of the truth.

It is, therefore, for the sake of the questions themselves which philosophy studies, and of the methods with which it pursues them, rather than for any set of answers that it propounds, that philosophy is to be valued. Through the greatness of the universe which it contemplates, the mind itself achieves greatness. It escapes from the circle of petty aims and desires which for most of us constitute the prison of everyday life, and, forgetting the nervous little clod of wants and ailments which is the self, is elevated into communion with that which is greater than the self. On the practical side this greatness of the mind generates qualities of tolerance, justice and understanding, in the growth of which lies the chief hope of the world to-day.

C. E. M. JOAD

JEWISH MYSTICISM

[Dr. Margaret Smith has written numerous essays in this journal on Sufi teachers and their doctrines. Besides being the author of *Rabia the Mystic*, she has also to her credit *Studies in Early Mysticism*.

Judaism as an exoteric creed is the most corrupted, and in it phallicism has developed. Hebrew esotericism is identical with Eastern esotericism, but those teachings are little known and less practised. This article, however, shows that the roots of numerous spiritual facts and truths are to be found in Hebrew texts. The restoration of the pure mystic element to Judaism will also effect an improvement in Christian outlook which is permeated through and through with tenets based on Jewish beliefs and tradition.—EDS.]

Although Judaism, with its insistence on the transcendence of God, its adherence to legalism and formal ritual, and its tendency to a narrow exclusiveness, might seem at first sight to offer little encouragement for the growth and development of mysticism, yet from a very early period we find mystical ideas at work within the Jewish faith.

Such ideas are to be found in the Pentateuch, and in the writings of the Psalmists and the Prophets, especially in those of Ezekiel and the Apocalyptic writers. It was upon this earlier teaching that the Rabbinic or Talmudic Midrashic school of Jewish mysticism, which had its rise in Palestine, and later developed into the mediæval Qabālā, based its doctrines. But these doctrines, in their most developed form, as we find them in the *Sēfer Yetsira* and the *Zohar* have embodied, in addition, elements which are to be found also in Zoroastrianism in Neo-Platonism and in Gnosticism.

The *Sēfer Yetsira* (Book of Creation) is the oldest philosophical work in the Hebrew language, though its date and origin are still

obscure. It has been ascribed to as early a date as the second century A.D., but this could only apply to certain parts of it, while others point to a much later date. It represents a mystic philosophy based upon the forms and values of the Hebrew alphabet, and while this teaching is to be found also in the Talmud, there is much in the book which is obviously due to Egyptian, Babylonian and Mandaean sources. According to its teaching, the production of the cosmos is the result of the action of the Divine Wisdom in the combination and manipulation of the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet, symbolically conceived, and the universe is thus an expression of the Divine Intelligence. Outside of the cosmos, yet dwelling within it, is One Being, the Infinite.

The *Sēfer Yetsira* includes a fully developed doctrine of emanation, all existence being regarded as an outflowing of the Infinite, who is therefore immanent in all existing things. He comprehends all things within Himself, and all apparent multiplicity is but an emanation from the One, a manifestation of the Godhead, whence all came, and

whither all must return; for all are ultimately one with the One, as the flame is one with the candle which gives it forth.

In connection with its teaching on emanation, the *Sefer Yetsira* deals with the *Ten Sefirôt*, here regarded as spiritual agents or emanations from God, and they are described as being like the fingers of the hand, ten in number, but in the midst of them is the "knot of the Unity".* The first of the ten is the Divine Spirit, from which are derived the three primal elements, air, water and fire, and the remaining six are the dimensions of space, *i. e.*, the four points of the compass, and height and depth. As all, from two to ten, are derived from the unit, so also is the multiplicity and variety in the universe but a manifestation of the Unity of God. The *Sefer Yetsira* therefore teaches that all Being is one, and that God is both transcendent and immanent; but while it is mainly concerned with the relation between God and the Universe, the development of Jewish mysticism which we find in the *Zohar* is concerned rather with the nature of God, His relation to the soul, and the means by which man can realise that relationship.

The *Zohar* (Book of Illumination), while it represents only a part of a much larger mystical literature, is much the most important and valuable work we possess, dealing with mediæval Jewish mysticism. It is written partly in Aramaic, partly in Hebrew, and it purports to be a commentary on

the Pentateuch, while actually it is a treatise of mystic theosophy, which aims at establishing a synthesis between the revealed Law and the mysteries hidden within it. It is attributed to Rabbi Simeon ben Yoḥai, who lived in the second century A. D., and consists of discourses between this Master and his fellow-mystics, but it is obviously of later date. It was made known to the public by a thirteenth century Quabbalistic writer, Moses de Leon, of Granada in Spain, and some have regarded him as the author; but the book is plainly not the work of a single writer or of one period only, but rather a compilation of material of great scope and variety, derived from both Jewish and non-Jewish sources, and woven into a mystical doctrine, containing a system of theosophy and cosmogony, which has been affected not only by the influences already mentioned, but also shews many points of contact with both Christian and Muslim mysticism (Sūfism).

The *Zohar* teaches an esoteric doctrine; each word of the Torah contains an exalted meaning and a sublime mystery, a soul within a soul, which the earnest seeker should strive to penetrate, but revelation is granted only to the elect, and even these do not all receive it in the same degree. Those who taught the Zoharistic doctrines first tested the capacities of their pupils and revealed the mysteries only to a chosen few. In this they followed the example of Rabbi Simeon, the Master,

* *Sefer Yetsira* I. 3

who entrusted his doctrines only to his disciples, and warned them against betraying the word confided to them, saying that the fate of the world depended on these mysteries. Man, he said, cannot understand the revelation of mysteries with his ordinary understanding; they can be revealed only to the Masters, who are fitted to receive such teaching, because they have been initiated. So the *Zohar* states that God is known to each one according to his receptive capacity—

for each man can attach himself to the Spirit of Wisdom only in so far as the breadth of his own spirit permits. And every man must try to deepen his own knowledge of God, in so far as his own understanding allows him to do so. But the Divine Essence must ever remain a profound mystery.

In its teaching on the nature of God, the *Zohar* upholds the view that everything emanates from the *En Sof*—the Infinite, who is the great Unknowable, the Supreme Incomprehensible, the Ancient of Days, the most Hidden of all Mysteries. God is all and all is God. He creates and continues to exist in all things, both what is hidden and what is revealed, in the seen and the unseen worlds, in what is animate and what is inanimate, that is, the universal Substance is one with God. So that the Zoharistic teaching is predominantly pantheistic; though God is infinite and transcendent, yet the universe and the soul of man reveal His power and His love; this world is a reflection of the Divine world, and there is a continuous and cons-

cious relation between that which is "above" and that which is "below".

The transcendent and infinite Godhead becomes immanent in the universe by means of successive emanations, representing the Thought and Action of the Infinite; there can be no creation out of non-existence, nor, consequently, can there be any return to nothingness. Of the creation the *Zohar* states:—

God created this lower world on the pattern of the world above; here is found the likeness of what is there; for all is a Unity . . . Before the creation of the world and before any form existed, God was alone, without form, resembling naught. Who could comprehend God as He was, before existence began to be? . . . Then He made Himself known as Jehovah, and manifested Himself according to His attributes. For if God had not manifested Himself under different attributes, how could He have ruled the world? If he had not shed His light upon His creatures, how could they know Him, and how also should be fulfilled the words of Scripture, "All the earth is filled with His Glory?"*

The *Zohar* teaches, then, with regard to creation, that it is the result of the thought, carried into action, of the Divine Being: to create means to think and to manifest, by means of the production of endless forms, all that exists being a part of the Divine Wisdom, before it appears in concrete form. So the Master, ben Yohai, tells his disciples:—

All things are in Him and He is in all things. He is established, since He upholds everything and at the same time He is not established, for we can find Him nowhere. He is the Light of

* *Zohar* II. fols. 20a, 42b.

all Lights, we can find only the light which He irradiates and which appears and disappears. This light is called by many Holy Names. But all the Holy Names stand for but one thing.*

This divine life-giving Spirit is never at any time withdrawn from the world which it animates. As God is the Light of Lights, so also He is Perfect Beauty. "Beauty," said the Master, "is like the sun, giving its light and warmth to all without exception or distinction. Beauty emanates from both Wisdom and Grace. It is the highest expression of life and of moral perfection. And Beauty, in its most sublime expression, is the Supreme King."†

The transcendent Infinite (*En Sof*), in becoming immanent, gives rise to four universes, the world of Emanation, the world of Creative Ideas, the world of Creative Formation, and the world of Creative Matter. The first two are filled with the Holy Light of the Godhead and there God is all and all is God, considered as Absolute and Transcendent; in the latter two the light of the Divine Essence has been lessened in order to allow of the existence of the souls of men, of the celestial beings and the inferior worlds. The divine Essence thus diffused is called the *Shekina*, the Mother of all, *i. e.*, God immanent. The manifestation of the Divine Will is to be found in all these, hence Evil is outside of them, it is but an outward appearance, an illusion, non-existent.

The conception of the *Ten Sefirot* appears again in the *Zohar*, as the

One manifesting Himself in plurality, and they represent the Attributes of God by which He is known to man. The first of these, in the *Zohar*, is called the *Crown*, representing pure, undifferentiated Being. The next two are Wisdom and Intelligence, considered as male and female principles, whose offspring is Reason (not counted as a *Sefira*), and this triad hold and unite in themselves all that which has been, which is and which will be, and in their turn are united to the first *Sefira* the *Crown*. The fourth and fifth *Sefirot* are Mercy and Justice, and from the union of these two result Beauty, the sixth *Sefira*. The seventh and eighth are Victory and Glory, giving rise by their union to the ninth, Foundation, representing stability. The last of the *Sefirot* is Royalty, summing up the qualities of the Supreme King, who is shewn by His attributes to be the force immanent in the world in respect of thought, morality and power. So it comes about that God is known to men as the Infinite, the All-Wise, the Compassionate, the All-Just, Supreme Beauty, the Victorious, the All-Glorious, the King and Foundation of All.

With regard to the Soul, the *Zohar* emphasises its pre-existence, before it was attached to the body, its relation to which is that of God to the world.

When God willed to create the world, He created beforehand all the souls destined for the bodies of all to come. When the time comes for a soul to des-

* *Zohar* Idra Zutta.

† *Zohar* Idra Rabba

cent into the world God calls it and says: "Go forth into such a country and inhabit such a body," and the souls of those who will never arrive at perfection cry, "Lord of the Universe; we are contented here; grant that we may remain and not descend thither." But He replies, "Ye were destined from the day that I created you, to descend into that world, and it was to that end ye were created," and hearing these words, the souls unwillingly descend into this world."*

The soul, according to the *Zohar*, includes the rational element,—which links it to the Divine,—the moral, and the physical, which drags it downward, and this conception suggests a Platonic origin. The reality of man consists in the higher soul, by which he was created in the Divine image, and he is regarded as a microcosm including all mysteries; he is the central point round which all creation revolves, a Divine Presence on earth.†

But when the soul has begun its course upon earth, its purity becomes affected by the weakness inherent in matter, and it is dragged down by the lower self. It must therefore strive to obtain an absolute mastery over the body and not to become its slave, and it is through trials and tribulations that man must win the joy of those who are re-united with their Source. The Divine within him enables man to raise himself, and the Divine Law guides him on his upward path. While predestination is not excluded, for nothing happens which has not been pre-ordained, yet man has free-will and

is master over his own actions, and each man is provided with an opportunity for good actions by which to escape punishment in a future world. The *Zohar* teaches the doctrine of re-incarnation partly that the soul may have the opportunity of achieving its own purification, and partly to serve the justice of God, since the sinner expiates his sins here and so wins entrance to Heaven. This is made possible by re-incarnation, wherein the soul consciously realises the bitterness of punishment and the grief of being unable to ascend on high and return to its original home in God. The Master, ben Yohai, when at the point of death bade his disciples note that the soul was immortal and could feel no joy until it re-entered the heavenly sphere and continued there to learn the meaning of the Divine mysteries. But the soul that found no entrance there knew that it was not to enter heaven at once, but only after being purified, and so long as there is any desire for repentance, the soul will be given another opportunity. If the soul placed here in the world fails to take root, it is withdrawn again and again, and transplanted again on earth, until it has taken root. Transmigration is inflicted as a punishment on the soul, varying in accordance with the nature of the sins it has committed, and every sinning soul must return to earth until it is perfected. Says the *Zohar*:—

All souls must undergo re-incarna-

* *Zohar* II. fol. 96b.

† Cf. the Sufi conception of the Perfect Man, as set forth by Ibn 'Arabi and al-Jili.

tion, but men do not know the ways of God, they do not know how the Divine Justice is maintained, nor do they realise that men are judged in heaven each day and each hour, and that the souls of men undergo judgment before coming into this world and after they return thence. Many are the re-incarnations through which souls must pass, and many are the vicissitudes to be undergone by the numberless souls and spirits, who go astray in this world below, and cannot find entrance into the Palace of the King. Many are the disturbances caused in this world by the transmigrations of souls; but all that escapes the sight of men who do not know that the souls are tossed about like a stone from a sling.*

Only the Righteous, those who "have emanated from the *Shekina*," are not subjected to re-incarnation.

But when the erring soul, having passed through many bodies, and experienced many existences here on earth, in each one making further progress than the last, is perfected, then it can attain to that union with the Divine for which it yearns unceasingly. This consummation of joy can be attained only through Love, that perfect love which remains steadfast in affliction and prosperity alike, and when such love has taken possession of a man, he flees all earthly joys. Love it is that draws the lower to the higher for in love lies the secret of Oneness. In the heavenly Palace of Love takes place the marriage of the soul with God and in that mystic marriage is consummated the soul's longing for the Divine, when by the Kiss of God (by which Moses died), the soul dies to itself, and is drawn up into the Presence

of God, even as the spark is drawn into the flame. Yet this is not annihilation, but only eternal realisation of its oneness with the Infinite.

It is to be noted that the mysticism of the *Zohar* was no narrow individualistic seeking after salvation. Vision was to be followed by action; the love which drew the mystic into union with the Divine, here and now, was to influence his attitude and all his actions in relation to his fellow men. The life of the universe is bound up with the life of each man, and each must live in the consciousness that it depends upon him whether others are left to continue to suffer and consume themselves in desire, or are helped to find peace and joy in attaining their pre-destined end. The perfected soul "has himself become a creator—a companion artist with God in His creations". From the mystic's attainment, good will flow towards himself, towards his fellow men, enemies as well as friends, towards the universe around him, even towards God Himself. The soul which has entered into union with the Supreme Being can help all creatures to share in the infinite mercy and love of God, and such a one will be loved, and feared, by all creatures.

The *Zohar* has had, and still has, a far-reaching influence. By its teachings, like those of other mystical doctrines, it sought to uplift humanity by showing man the way to the Path of God, and the life of union with Him. Its

* *Zohar* II. 99c.

influence was naturally greatest upon those among whom it had its rise; by means of the *Zohar* the Jews were led to find a new mystical force in their faith and to seek for the spirit behind the letter: Through its teaching, they learned to know the true meaning of love, to understand the hidden message of the Divine Spirit underlying all the problems of life, to bear all their sufferings and persecutions without being embittered by them, and to look upon all the vicissitudes of life in this world as but transitory, from which they might pass to eternal light and joy. The Zoharistic teachings were incorporated into the Hebrew Liturgy, and affected

mediæval religious poetry outside the synagogue, and therefore had an influence upon Judaism in general, while they were the chief inspiration of the schools of mysticism which developed in Palestine and are represented to-day by the *Hassidim*. But the influence of the *Zohar* upon poetical, philosophical and mystical works during the last six centuries has not been limited to those of Jewish writers; it proved to be very attractive also to Christian scholars, who have been the means of making its teachings known and appreciated among those to whom "all ways lead but to the One".

MARGARET SMITH

Cf. W. W. Westcott *Sefer Yezirah* (London, 1893) Knorr von Rosenroth *Kabbala Denudata* (Hebrew text and Latin commentary 1677—1684); *Sepher ha-Zohar*, tr. J. de Pauly (Paris 1909); *The Zohar* I. tr., H. Sperling and M. Simon (London 1931); *The Zohar in Moslem and Christian Spain*. A. Bension (London 1932); A. Frank, *La Kabbale* (Paris 1892).

ALCHEMY IN MOROCCO

[Dr. E. J. Holmyard is a well-known and recognised authority on the subject of Alchemy, and has communicated useful information through his numerous articles in these pages. He wrote in our second number a very interesting article on "Alchemy" in which he stated that "in spite of all the patient investigation that has been carried out, we still know little of the beginnings of alchemy except that, far back as we may go, the art appears to be yet older". In our second volume Dr. Holmyard contributed a series on the lives of some important alchemists and in subsequent volumes wrote about Islamic and Chinese Alchemy. —EDS.]

Leo Africanus, the Berber traveller of the fifteenth century, relates that at Fez he discovered "a most stupid set of men, who contaminated themselves with sulphur and other horrible smells". Fez was indeed, for a very lengthy period, one of the principle centres of alchemy, and though the casual visitor of the present day may wander through its tortuous alleys but find no single adept among its pallid, yellow-slipped throngs, the conclusion that alchemy is no longer practised in that ancient city would be entirely false. By the orthodox of Islam, however, alchemy has long been frowned upon. It is true that the Prophet himself was credited with full initiation, and that the Caliph Ali ibn Abi Talib pronounced the celebrated "Sermon of Revelation" upon the Art; but the fact that many of the principal alchemists were Shi'ites and Persians helped to make the much more numerous Sunni faction treat alchemy with suspicion and contempt. In the popular literature, the alchemist was always a scoundrel and almost always a Persian.

Yet though alchemy has been largely driven underground in the

majority of Muslim countries, it continues to lead a flourishing, if subterranean, existence. Among the townsmen of Arabia, Syria and Persia there are many who devote their lives and substance to the mediæval form of the Art, thumbing the pages of Jabir ibn Hayyan, Ibn Arfa Ra's and Al-Jildaki with hands stained by the operations of the laboratory. Sulphur and mercury, marcasite and sandarach, realgar and kuhl, are still made to undergo the complex and interminable calcinations, fixations, cerations, albifications and rubefactions so familiar to the student of alchemical literature. In Fez, however, it would be easy to spend months in a vain search for a professed member of the People(*Qom*); the native bookshops may be ransacked without the discovery of a single alchemical manuscript; and even well-educated citizens will profess a suave ignorance of the very names of the great Masters.

It is not until they are completely convinced of the sincerity of one's motives, and assured of one's lack of the almost universal scepticism with which Europeans regard the tenets of alchemy, that the Fazi adepts will begin to throw off the

cloak of secrecy. Then, however, though still with caution, the admission may be made that "a certain *shaikh* is believed to practise alchemy in the Holy City of Moulay Idriss," or that such-and-such a Hajji brought back an alchemical treatise from Damascus. Finally, one may be led—from behind closed doors and shutters—down a flight of stone stairs, past a water wheel driven by one of the underground rivulets of Fez, and through a narrow passage into a cellar which is at once the study and the laboratory of a contemporary follower of an age-old science.

There is little doubt that, could a European scholar sufficiently ingratiate himself with Fazi alchemists, and could he spare the time for such an exasperatingly slow negotiation, rich treasures of alchemical literature would be brought to light. The chief authorities, Jabir, Rhazes, Avicenna and the like, are of course universal in popularity, but the North African adepts are still too little known, and much awaits the patient investigator in these fields. It is all the more desirable that this work should be undertaken inasmuch as the introduction of alchemy into Europe took place mainly in Moorish Spain, which in turn was principally influenced by Western (Moghreby) Islamic thought. Though the main lines of transmission are reasonably clear, details are sadly lacking, and until the Arabic manuscripts of Fez and Spain have been thoroughly studied, our knowledge of the flow and evolution of alchemical thought must remain far too con-

jural.

One of the principal alchemists of Morocco was Abu'l-Hasan Ali ibn Musa, generally known as Ibn Arfa Ra's, who died at Fez at an advanced age in 1197 A. D. Among his fellow-countrymen in Morocco and Spain, he attained a reputation second only to that of Jabir, mainly on account of his celebrated alchemical poem entitled *Shudhūr al-Dhahab* ("Particles of Gold"). This work, though it has been published at Bombay in a lithographed edition, has not yet found a European translator or editor and is consequently little known. Written for the most part in the stately metre called *tawil*, it presents a masterly exposition of twelfth-century alchemical philosophy in concise and polished verse. The economy of phrase that characterizes it is, indeed, so great that the author himself consented to write a commentary upon it, to elucidate the more difficult passages. This commentary, which was redacted by Ibn Arfa Ra's's pupil and personal friend, Abu'l-Quasim al-Ansari, is fortunately still extant, as is also a second commentary made by the indefatigable student of alchemical literature, Aidamir al-Jildaki (fourteenth century).

A later Moroccan alchemist was Abu Abdullah Muhammad ibn Ahmad al-Hasani, who lived at Tlemsen and there wrote his great book, *A Complete Account of the Perfect Preparation*. So far as is known, only one copy of this work exists—a manuscript in the Royal Library of His Majesty the King

of Egypt. The author tells us that he composed the treatise in response to the requests of his brethren in God, after having studied the science in Egypt and in Mecca and Medina. Returning from Medina to Egypt, he had a vision of the Prophet, whom he asked concerning the Most Noble Stone. The Prophet having replied that the Stone was thus and thus, Al-Hasani besought the Prophet for power to understand the esoteric meanings of alchemical books, and God bestowed this favour upon him. His book, while of very considerable interest, is by no means easy to understand; but the general philosophical background is such as is already familiar to students of alchemy from the writings of Jabir and Avicenna.

The fundamental conception of Al-Hasani and his fellows is that of the unity of matter, and its permeation by the Divine essence. Exoterically, it was believed by Muslim chemists that (to use the Aristotelian notation) the *Prime Matter* of the universe, before it can become a definite substance, must be united with *Specific Form*; and according to the specific form which it receives, the prime matter gives rise to all the various substances of which the world is composed. The most simple kinds of specific form are those which, impressed upon the prime matter, give rise to Fire, Air, Water and Earth, the "Four Elements" of Greek and Muslim philosophy. As to metals, they are all one in species; that is, they are composed of the prime matter united with

the same specific form. The existence of various metals was accounted for by supposing that accidental qualities had become intermingled with the pure metallic species, except in gold. Gold represented the state of metallic perfection, a state which no other metal had succeeded in reaching. Accidental qualities, however, might be removed by appropriate treatment, and thus a theoretical justification of physical alchemy was established.

The base metals differed from gold, it was considered, by excess or deficiency of certain constituents. The problem then was to find an agent that would remove the excess, or make up the deficiency, and this agent was called the Elixir (*Al-Iksir*) or the Philosopher's Stone. It was usually thought that no one substance would be sufficient: there must be two Elixirs, a red one to convert silver into gold and a white one to convert the remaining metals into silver.

Beyond or behind this "physical" theory, however, there was a secret doctrine of which an adequate idea is difficult to convey. It is hinted at, partially revealed, and obscured again, in practically every Muslim alchemical treatise, and nowhere more than in the pages of Al-Hasani. The close connection with Sufi-ism which many alchemists maintained, and the very clear traces of Gnostic and Manichee doctrine which thread Muslim alchemical literature, show unmistakably that while physical transmutation was doubtless an impor-

tant side-issue of the adepts, only the vulgar among them would regard it as an end in itself. Islamic alchemy, particularly in its Western form, was of a two-fold nature, and if one aspect of it gave rise in due course to the science of chemistry as we now know it, the other preserved and strengthened the mystical lore which apparently arose in the beginnings of human culture and has never lost its perennial vitality.

With the expulsion of the Moors from Spain towards the close of the fifteenth century, Moroccan al-

chemy—which had doubtless drawn support from the Andalusian adepts—begins to deteriorate. We have seen that, to Leo Africanus, the alchemists of Fez were “base fellows” mightily addicted to “a vain practice,” and with the lapse of years the Art fell more and more into disrepute. The last Moroccan adept of any fame was Muhammad ibn Muhammad Maghush al-Maghribi, who died in 1540 A.D., after composing a treatise on alchemy at the request of the Sultan Sulaiman of Turkey.

E. J. HOLMYARD

No doubt that there is such a thing in nature as transmutation of the baser metals into the nobler, or gold. But this is only one aspect of alchemy, the terrestrial or purely material, for we sense logically the same process, taking place in the bowels of the earth. Yet, besides and beyond this interpretation, there is in alchemy a symbolical meaning, purely psychic and spiritual. While the Kabbalist-Alchemist seeks for the realization of the former, the Occultist-Alchemist, spurning the gold of the mines, gives all his attention and directs his efforts only towards the transmutation of the baser *quaternary* into the divine upper *trinity* of man, which when finally blended are one. The spiritual, mental, psychic, and physical planes of human existence are in alchemy compared to the four elements, fire, air, water and earth, and are each capable of a threefold constitution, *i. e.*, fixed, mutable and volatile. Little or nothing is known by the word concerning the origin of this archaic branch of philosophy.

—H. P. BLAVATSKY, *Glossary*

NEW BOOKS AND OLD

WAS MARX A MYSTIC ?*

[**John Middleton Murry's** interest in Karl Marx is not merely academic. He is a practical revolutionist who is working through the Independent Labour Party of Great Britain to usher in a new social order. His views of Marxian Socialism are very different from those of ordinary socialists; we refer our readers to his article in our May number.—EDS.]

Mr. Carr quotes, at the end of his life of Marx, a picture of the man as he appeared in his old age to H. M. Hyndman :—

He combined in his own person and nature, with his commanding forehead and overhanging brow, his fierce glittering eyes, broad sensitive nose and mobile mouth, all surrounded by a setting of untrimmed hair and beard, the righteous fury of the great seers of his race with the cold analytical power of Spinoza and the Jewish doctors. It was an extraordinary combination of qualities, the like of which I have known in no other man.

That description, which I have never read before, corresponds with a surprising exactness to my own mental picture of Karl Marx, formed from a reading of his works. Marx, ever since I came under his spell, has always appeared to me as the last in the great succession of Jewish prophets.

"Marx was a prophet," declares Mr. Carr; and since Marx's latest biographer is no "Marxist" but, in the main, vigorously critical of his doctrines and his conduct, his tribute is the more impressive for its unexpectedness. "Marx," says

Mr. Carr again, "was one of the few—perhaps the first since Luther—whose life has constituted a turning-point in human thought".

Oddly enough, Mr. Carr makes very little attempt to explain the nature of this revolution of human thought; and perhaps he himself does not understand it clearly. But he is conscious that it is there. He writes in his final paragraph :—

Few men have, on the whole, proved more far-seeing in their prophecies than Marx. But any one who is unable to accept either the Marxist hypothesis of the millennium, or the non-Marxist hypothesis of the approaching end of civilization, must necessarily anticipate a new, though probably not an imminent revolution in human thought.

Those words are, in themselves, a curious confirmation of a parallel which continually haunts my mind, between Marxism and early Christianity. When Jesus of Nazareth appeared with his message, there was precisely the same opposition between a doctrine of the approaching end of civilization, and a doctrine of an imminent millennium, which Mr. Carr indicates as existing to-day. The eschatolog-

* *Karl Marx: A Study in Fanaticism.* By E. H. Carr (J. M. Dent & Sons, Ltd., London. 12s. 6d.)
What Marx Really Meant. By G. D. H. Cole (Victor Gollancz Ltd., London. 5s.)

ical belief of the Jews of Jesus' time was a belief in a millennium through catastrophe. And there seems to me no doubt that Marx himself was tinged with this deeply-rooted Jewish belief. It re-emerged in him, in a new form. But it is to simplify and falsify the true position of Marx to credit him with the naïve "Marxist" belief in the millennium. Indubitably, he did believe that the world, now unified materially by the advent of industrial capitalism, was destined to enter 'on a new epoch: as he put it, "pre-history would end and History begin". That would be, in one sense, a millennium; but it would be a very relative millennium. And a millennium which is relative is not a millennium.

To the true proletarian, the completely disinherited member of modern industrial society, *to be secure of food, and clothing and shelter must seem like heaven on earth; but the security is no defence against the subtler pains of human life.* Nor is there the faintest reason for supposing that Marx imagined it would be. He had more than his fair share of intimate misery; he knew what it was to suffer, as even Mr. Carr has to admit. What the social revolution would do was to bring "the life of the soul" within the reach of every man. No longer would the greater part of mankind be immersed in the mere struggle for animal existence: the joys and sorrows of true human life would be open to all. True history—human

history as distinct from animal history—would begin.

If that is what is meant by the "millennium," then certainly Marx believed in it, and believed that it was ultimately inevitable. But he was under no illusions as to the price humanity might have to pay to enter it. He thought that it could only be won by a political victory of the working-class; and again he was probably right. But what he did not foresee was the immense inertia of the working-class itself. Marx was not a member of the working-class: he was a highly educated German intellectual, who had, without a moment's hesitation, sacrificed a brilliant career and a life of ease for a painful existence as a prophet and leader of the proletariat. Probably at the beginning he took for granted a similar imaginative heroism in the working-class itself.

That is only to say that Marx was a prophet and not a politician. Nor have I any doubt that he was sustained by a prophet's insight, and by the sense of being "a man of destiny". He was the most completely conscious human being of his age. And that, I think, is the right designation for him. To call him a mystic would be to use that ambiguous word in a new and unfamiliar sense. But if we separate out as the characteristic "notes" of mysticism, first, a sense of complete integration into the universe, and, second, a supreme degree of detachment from one's own "animal" existence; then it

must be admitted that Marx manifested them both in a high degree. He felt that the dynamic process of human history had become conscious in himself: in him, humanity had reached a new phase of self-awareness. And this new self-awareness of mankind, of which he was the vehicle, was necessarily manifest in him as a complete detachment from his own personal vicissitudes. He had the objective ruthlessness and the domestic tenderness of the man inspired with a true creative mission.

What that mission actually was, it is too early to pronounce. So far Marx has been the inspiration of one immense political revolution. Considered merely as the seed which has grown into Soviet Russia his influence on the modern world has already been greater than that of any other single man of his age. But *the relation of Soviet Russia to Marx is not altogether unlike the relation of the Catholic Church to Jesus*: and the simple fact that Russia was in Marx's view the last possible country in Europe where a Marxist revolution could take place and the Russians the last possible people to achieve it is an indication of the discrepancy. Marx believed that the social revolution must be achieved by a democratic revolution. That has not occurred. In Russia we have had a social revolution without a democratic revolution; and in Germany we have had its opposite, a democratic revolution without a social revolution. To the Russians, Marx has been a Christ; to the Germans, an anti-Christ. The real

step into that future in which Marx believed—"the classless society"—still remains to be taken.

Mr. Cole's book *What Marx Really Meant*, has for its main purpose an attempt to explore the possibilities of an authentic Marxist—that is, democratic *and* social—revolution in Great Britain. Since that was the country from which the facts of Marx's theory were drawn, and the country with whose political destinies he was most deeply concerned, the title of Mr. Cole's book is amply justified. If we wish to know what, in actual practice to-day, is the exoteric meaning of Marxist doctrine, we cannot do better than to consult Mr. Cole's book. But we shall seek in vain in it for the secret of the Marxian dynamic. That is of two kinds. First, there is the popular dynamic which is indubitably operative in Russia to-day. That is a primitive religious dynamic of precisely the same order as that of primitive Christianity: the belief of a slave-class (for Russian workers and peasants before the revolution were no more) in a real, and not a relative, millennium. The second is the dynamic of the Marxism of Marx himself—that vision which enabled him to live a life of heroic self-devotion to a cause which never came and which he knew would never come remotely near to triumphing during his life-time. It may be an intellectual or religious bias in myself which leads one to regard this as ultimately by far the more important of the two. At any rate, I am convinced that this Marxian

dynamic, and the peculiar self-awareness on which it depends, is the natural and necessary ally of any genuine spiritual realization in the world-to-day. And, paradoxically, I believe that that awareness will prove to be necessary if an authentic Marxist social revolution is ever to be achieved. So that, in my view, although *the practical effects of Marx, by thesis in Russia and by anti-thesis in Germany, have*

been prodigious, they are essentially a degradation of the Marxist dynamic. This, I believe, will be genuinely operative only in the country where that dynamic is strong enough to inspire democracy to advance of its own accord to the classless society. To such a political and social movement Marx will be neither Christ nor anti-Christ, but one of the greatest of modern Teachers.

J. MIDDLETON MURRY

THE KEY TO BLAKE

[**Max Plowman**, the author of *An Introduction to the Study of Blake*, has written much on that Mystic and Poet.—EDS.]

"Blake," said a reviewer the other day, "was primarily an artist, and an artist is a man whose gift it is to communicate the light of his being." Then, referring to Mr. Murry's new book,* he added naïvely: "If Blake had that gift in superlative degree, why should it be necessary for another man to come forward a hundred years after his death and tell us what the light was?"

A question so simple hardly calls for reply, but since it suggests many reasons why Blake is still little understood, we will answer it directly.

One reason is to be found in the modern habit of superficial reading. The habit has increased enormously in the past hundred years and it is one that vitiates mental energy. Only too often the modern reader faced with matter of any profundity

finds that the muscles of his mind are stiff, and there is strain where there should be satisfaction, and apathy instead of apprehension.

Another reason might be found in the consideration that the light which comes from the most distant star now visible has taken an unbelievably long time to reach us. Yet another and more apposite answer is to be found in Blake's couplet:—

We are led to believe a lie
When we see with, not through the eye.

For these words have an historical as well as a personal bearing. For a century, western man has concentrated his whole energy upon seeing *with* the eye: the very virtue of the scientific eye lies in the purity of its objective reflection; and in this fact is to be found a very simple reason why an artist who declared that his work could

* *William Blake*. By John Middleton Murry. (Jonathan Cape Ltd., London. 10s. 6d.)

only be understood by *another order of seeing* should have remained for that period uncomprehended. When "the light shineth in darkness," it is not the way of wisdom to question the light if "the darkness comprehended it not".

In the first of his *Engraved Designs to the Book of Job* Blake wrote: "The Letter Killeth. The Spirit giveth Life. It is Spiritually discerned"—which, being particularly interpreted, means: He who looks at these designs merely *with* the eye will see nothing. In another place he declared: "Allegory addressed to the Intellectual powers, which is altogether hidden from the Corporeal Understanding, is my definition of the Most Sublime Poetry." If we can discover exactly what he meant by these phrases we shall perhaps see clearly why he is unintelligible apart from spiritual discernment.

What are these "Intellectual powers"? They are, I think, the powers of recognition—literal recognition—the powers by which we attain to a vital knowing in place of mere cognizance. Blake in early days gave this explanation of the character of all his writing:

As the true method of knowledge is experiment, the true faculty of knowing must be the faculty which experiences. This faculty I treat of.

So it appears that the intellectual powers are the powers which make experience intelligible.

That is a description of consciousness. Consciousness is something very wonderful. It is the intelligent experience of something that is not ourselves. It func-

tions by means of the imagination, through which we are able to enter into the life of an object alien to our own physical body. It is distinguished from cognition by experience. Therefore, according to the argument, knowledge which is *not* an explanation of experience—knowledge divorced from consciousness—is not "true knowledge". If it is not true knowledge, what is it? Blake describes it as Corporeal Understanding. And his terminology is apt; for this knowledge is, as it were, the mere percussion of fact against our own physical body: it is the awareness of an object in its disharmony to ourselves: it is cognition, but not recognition: it is the hearing of a report without experiencing the event: it is the admission of a seed of truth into the mind without any consequent germination: it is the retention of tidings in an outer chamber of the mind where they remain isolated, untouched by the imagination and therefore incapable of passing into the experiencing consciousness.

Now this experiencing consciousness is synonymous with what is called spirit. Thus we see whatever the mind, by the act of recognition, passes through the experiencing consciousness is spiritually discerned.

Blake appealed exclusively to this experiencing consciousness. His distinction among English poets is this exclusiveness. Whereas poets in general are concerned to keep touch with rational thought and from its apex reach the imaginative consciousness, Blake discards the rational process and

makes a direct appeal. What makes him strange is the quintessential nature of his demand that poetry shall speak directly to consciousness, and not suffer the distortion or interpolation of matter that is not essentially imaginative. Imagination, he believed, was the language of the spirit; he therefore endeavoured to speak entirely in that tongue. And since language itself is created by imagination, poetry cannot be confined to the mercantile use of words as tokens of limited exchange value. The verbal function of imagination is to heighten and extend the meaning of words continually, and ultimately so to pack them with imaginative content that they become symbolic.

The reader of Blake must be prepared for this extended use of language. But above all, since Blake's utterance is from an experiencing consciousness, he must bring to it a corresponding experiencing consciousness: he must, in fact, read Blake and the book of his own experience at the same time. Then he will see, in epic form, visions of the events that transpire within his own soul, and he will see them in the revealing light of one who was ruthless in his own self-examination. And he will find that Blake, because he was an artist, was a true surrogate and not a psycho-analyst.

But Blake as profound psychologist is only half the story. Why was it that he discarded the trappings of Elizabethan poetic usage that he had worn so finely in the *Poetical Sketches*? Why, too, did he

reject the whole mechanism of logical thought after having given proof that he could use it as well as any man? What led him to take Dr. Isaac Watts and Milton for his models after copying Spenser and Shakespeare so admirably? How came he to make of his verse anything so nebulous to common sense as "visions of Eternity"?

Mr. Murry knows: knows by experience. And that experience is the true and only key to Blake. Mr. Murry applies the key quite simply to all the doors of the so-called prophetic books that from the corridor of approach appear so dark, but within are full of light. The same key fits all the doors. Without it, Blake is a dungeon: with it, he is a dome of many-coloured glass.

Blake experienced the Divine Vision. In a moment of time he became an inhabitant of Eternity. He saw that which no man can see without passing from existence into the realm of being. He saw in vision the Reality that lies behind actuality. He saw "the Infinite in all things". He saw that which, in the moment, killed, annihilated, and utterly obliterated his own ego. He saw that which lies open to everyone whose sincerity in suffering is for a moment absolute.

It happened to Blake, without doubt, at the death of his brother Robert. Through his own broken heart Blake saw the Divine Vision; for at that moment he experienced physical death in the imagination, and in consequence saw through it. Thereafter, as a perfectly natural

result, the appearance of things ceased for ever to be of importance to him; it was with the life and death of what is beyond sensation that he was concerned.

But when once I did descry
The Immortal Man that cannot die

is his description of the moment. The veil was lifted, the doors of perception were cleansed, and *he saw the immortal spirit, not as a cause of which the body was an effect, but as the reality of which the body was an appearance.* Did he thereupon deny the senses? On the contrary, only then did he understand their mediatory use, and hence their vast importance. But because he had looked through death and clearly seen it to be only a physical appearance, he could not be detained by appearances and give to them his regard: he had perceived an Infinite and Eternal Reality of which they were but temporal expressions. It was, in a sense, merely a matter of natural and spiritual values; but once Blake had discovered spiritual value he counted everything else but dross.

So Blake became a mystic. His course as such Mr. Murry has followed with a zest and perception worthy of their object. His book is the first adequate interpretation of Blake that has ever been made. Never before has the inner chronological development been understood. Never before has anyone divined the changing nature of Blake's symbolic figures, nor understood the imperative necessity of their changes. Here, for the first time, the inner significance of

The French Revolution is perceived. Here, for the first time, we discover why there is a falling away in the later Lambeth books, and realise what a crucial struggle is enacted in *The Four Zoas*. Nothing hitherto written about Blake's *Milton* can compare with Mr. Murry's simple and profound exposition. Never before have Blake's dark sayings on Art and Artists been so fully comprehended. The book is a rare example of what creative literary criticism really is.

Yet without detracting it must be said that Blake is wider, freer, and above all, far more joyous than he appears in this portrait. Blake's vision was essentially cosmic: Mr. Murry's is essentially microcosmic. There is a lark and a wide-ranging eagle in Blake: Mr. Murry's Blake is a good deal of the hermit crab. Blake derives from the Christian tradition, and religious ecstasy is never far from him: Mr. Murry derives from Natural Evolution, and materialistic determinism hides round his corners. If ever there was a triumphant supernaturalist in the strict sense of the word, it was Blake. Mr. Murry is frightened by the word supernatural: it means for him contrary to nature; so the supernatural in Blake is glosed or denied. Indeed Mr. Murry's subjective method involves some trimming of the borders of Blake's singing robes in order to make them conform to the pattern of Mr. Murry's understanding: a fact for which he is not in the least to be blamed. On the contrary, this self-projection is the only honest way of showing both the

limitations and the extent of individual understanding. Criticism does not really begin until this imaginative re-entry into experience has been made. So it is that in the *quality* of what Mr. Murry perceives he is magnificent—perfect. Yet he needs to open another eye to see all there manifestly is in Blake. That eye is the eye of faith. Mr. Murry is habitually inclined to mistrust these intimations of consciousness which he cannot verify with his intellect. But it is precisely these which the poet trusts. Faith is the act of trust in that which the intellect cannot reach. To the intellect this trust seems to be trust in nothing; but to the imagination it is *the way*, the only deed that can follow upon self-annihilation, the impelled adventure of the enfranchised soul,

the birthplace of true art. It is freedom from self in action. And there is no joy without it. Joy is man's spiritual goal, and the sign that Blake knew life to be a divine comedy is the fact that his work is full of joy. Mr. Murry stops short of all this. The joy in Blake fascinates him, but it is foreign to his thought. I wonder why. Is it because he will not accept in all its fullness the meaning of resurrection? The resurrected body, which is the identity that has experienced self-annihilation, is to his eye rather a worn and ghostly figure, still cumbered by its grave-clothes. For Blake, "It is raised a spiritual body". He knew the meaning of joyous ascension—of the heavens opening—of New Jerusalem coming out of the opened heavens.

MAX PLOWMAN

Outlines of Buddhism: A Historical Sketch. By MRS. RHYS DAVIDS. D. Litt. (Methuen and Co., Ltd., London. 5s.)

In this essay, for in size it is little more, a famous authority on the Pali Canon continues her attack on orthodox Buddhism. Her arguments are so intensely interesting and so well backed with references that one almost forgets the curiously involved style and uncouth terminology which make her works such difficult reading. Her challenge, however, is clear enough, that were a disciple of the Buddha to appear to-day he would scarcely recognise in "Buddhism" his Master's teaching. All that we have left, she argues, is a negative and fruitless parody of the sublime message which crowned the immemorial wisdom of India.

The author argues that while Indian philosophy at the time of the Buddha

had reached a conception of the Absolute as the ultimate Ideal and, at the other end of the scale, had realised the immanence of this Ideal in every human heart, it lacked a positive, constructive declaration of the process by which the part becomes the whole, an explanation of that ceaseless becoming from the potential to the actual whereby the Man-as-More, to use the author's words, becomes in time the Most. As corollaries to this new knowledge, the Buddha made clear the relationship of spiritual brotherhood implicit in this doctrine of immanence, and the fact, not then appreciated to the full, that this Way of Becoming was a way of *self-development* in which each unit must, while helping all others, work out its own salvation, with diligence. In the opinion of the author, in this joyful creative message which lies in the word "become," the Buddha proclaimed a

positive, dynamic will to progress, using the symbol of a Way with each man as a wayfarer, in order to stress the need of unceasing self-development towards a goal he had himself attained. All too early, as expert examination of the Pali Canon reveals, this mighty message was smothered by monastic influence, and replaced by a number of dogmatic formulae, such as the Signs of Being and the Four Noble Truths, which can be shown to be of later origin. In the same way, in the place of the sublime morality of which but fragments remain in the recorded Scriptures, there was evolved the cold, monastic sterility of the negatively formulated *Pansil*, while with the ascendance of monkish influence came the insistence on a semi-mechanical causation, with "becoming" as a mere link in the chain to be broken as soon as possible, and this as a substitute for that living reality of self-becoming in which the meaning of *Karma* and sister truths were only comprehensible as the flower of living experience. So long as monasteries were principally rest-houses for monks between periods of missionary endeavour, the dynamic message of the Master, long needed by India, burned like a brilliant flame; but with the decay of the Sangha into a place of escape from life as distinct from a place wherein it might be more vividly realised, the original teaching of Man as More was swiftly degraded into a static condition of the Man as Less, until the negative doctrines of *Dukkha* and *Anatta*, useful as correctives to a misunderstanding of the nature of worldly life, became elevated into the very Message of the Master, and proclaimed as his unique contribution to Indian thought.

This emasculation of the Buddha's teaching is clearly shown, the author contends, by the rejection at the

Council held in the time of Asoka of those who held these, as she claims, original views; and in her opinion it was the spiritual descendants of these rejected Gnostics, travelling later to China, who there built up the dynamic Mahayana, or Greater Way, as distinct from the Hinayana or lesser, because static and negative Way of the Southern or Thera Vada School.

Such is the author's theme. Whether she is right in regarding most of what is now taught in the latter School as Buddhism as "decadent elaborations" on the Master's message is for individual opinion to decide. Her views are sufficiently well reasoned and documented to merit most careful attention, and if they in some ways overshoot the truth, this is an inevitable defect of every effort to remould public opinion. From the point of view of the ancient Wisdom we call Theosophy, her views are biased by her failure to appreciate that the Buddha was not a mere philosopher, but *Buddha*, the Enlightened One. And it must not be forgotten that to a certain type of mind the negative expression of doctrine is a better corrective to certain typical faults than the complementary message which all too easily loses itself in unproductive exuberance. Adequate criticism, however, in the space permitted is impossible, but no criticism can drown the voice which proclaims to Thera Vada Buddhists that the Master they attempt to follow never would have advocated the sterile dogmas found in every Buddhist textbook as the basis of His Teaching, though they play a most useful part as an incentive to the "will-to-become" which lies at the heart of Wisdom, and for the achievement of which the Blessed One proclaimed the Middle Way.

CHRISTMAS HUMPHREYS

After Strange Gods: A Primer of Modern Heresy. The Page-Barbour Lectures at the University of Virginia. By T. S. ELIOT. (Faber and Faber, London. 3s. 6d.)

This is the second-fruit of Mr. Eliot's recent visit to America. At Virginia he ascended the platform, to quote his own words, "only in the role of a moralist," although the subject to which he was concerned to apply his moral principles or to persuade others to do so was modern literature, and particularly the work of certain modern writers, such as Hardy, Ezra Pound, and D. H. Lawrence, which illustrated his thesis. But the demoralisation which he deplored in the particular province of literature is a disease of modern life, and implicit in these three lectures is that larger reference. They are meant to encourage men in what Mr. Eliot calls "the struggle of our time to concentrate, not to dissipate; to renew our association with traditional wisdom; to re-establish a vital connexion between the individual and the race; the struggle, in a word, against Liberalism."

He does not define Liberalism but lumps it with "Progress and Modern Civilisation" as something to which we cannot and ought not to reconcile ourselves. And there is of course a sense in which all these things are false and must be reconceived. They are false because they are the expression of a one-sided individualism carried to destructive extremes. Modern life has become demoralised through the same agency which Mr. Eliot discerns in modern art, "the *unregenerate* personality, partly self-deceived and partly irresponsible, and because of its freedom, terribly *limited* by prejudice and self-conceit, capable of much good or great mischief according to the natural goodness or impurity of the man."

Granted. But how then is the sick personality, which is the cause of it

all, to be regenerated? Here, as usual, Mr. Eliot's prescription seems to me quite inadequate. And it is inadequate because he fears the unregenerate self too much to surrender it. Instead he would merely control, educate and cultivate it. Inevitably, therefore, to him the "Inner Light" is "the most untrustworthy and deceitful guide that ever offered itself to wandering humanity".

To which one can only reply that such a deceitful guide is in no true sense the "Inner Light". But Mr. Eliot cannot see beyond the old precarious balance of rebellious will and external restraint, whether it be of tradition or institution. He cannot admit the necessity, because apparently he questions the possibility, of a man becoming through interior, disciplined growth a centre of that true Light, "which lighteth every man that cometh into the world". While, therefore, one may agree with almost all he says of the crippling effect of growing up without the support of a living and central tradition, I cannot believe that any real regeneration can be effected by such doses of "tradition, perpetually criticised and brought up to date under the supervision of orthodoxy," as he recommends. For it is only within a new and vital order that what is true in past cultures can be creatively reaffirmed. Consequently the break-down of the old forms and restraints is not in fact the unmitigated disaster which Mr. Eliot conceives it to be. For falsity was in them as well as truth and from their dissolution new forms may be born which will express, not an anxious orthodoxy, but a fearless integrity. Because he does not conceive the need of such an integrity Mr. Eliot can only oppose a disdainfully critical mind to the disorder of the modern world. And there is no real inspiration and curiously little relevance to-day in the kind of order he would reimpose.

HUGH P.A. FAUSSET

I was a Pagan. By V. C. KITCHEN. (Hodder and Stoughton, Ltd. London 5s.)

The "Oxford Group" is a widespread and influential revival movement in Protestant Christianity. Despite its comparatively recent foundation, its adherents are already, we are told, to be found in forty countries, and some of its gatherings—curiously called "house-parties"—have been attended by no less than 5000 people. It differs from other movements of the same kind, such as Methodism and the Salvation Army, in that its stress is rather on conduct and inner attitude than on mere faith. Like its predecessors, the Oxford Group accepts Jesus as a still-living, personal, saviour-god; but it seems to regard him, not so much as a scape-goat sacrificed for the sins of mankind, as an active fount of inspiration, to be contacted and experienced inwardly. There seems to be evidence that the activities of the Oxford Group have been the means of giving new life to a moribund religion; and it has certainly turned numbers of slack or nominal Christians into Christians who, with more or less success, are attempting to frame their lives upon the ethical precepts of Jesus.

In *I was a Pagan*, Mr. V. C. Kitchen tells the story of his conversion and its effect on his life. The book is a blend of autobiography and propaganda for the Oxford Group and, as such, emphasises the sinfulness that preceded, and the reformation that followed the author's conversion. Very many of the principles, which Mr. Kitchen endeavours to "sell" us with all the persuasive skill he learned as a New York advertising expert, are eminently good and wise. When, for example, he urges over and over again that no preaching to others can be effective unless the preacher re-orders his own life and practises his own precepts, he is uttering a vital truth which sadly needs attention in these days of elaborate paper schemes for turning the world into Utopia by means of political or economic changes.

The peculiar methods adopted by the Oxford Group for influencing men to lead better lives have been extravagantly praised and as keenly condemned. The truth about them seems to be that some are spiritually wholesome and conducive to ethical improvement, while others are of doubtful value or even dangerous.

When Mr. Kitchen insists that all our relations with our fellows should be based on brotherly love, honesty, and moral purity, he is defining the indispensable conditions for all individual and collective reforms. His emphasis on the need of complete surrender to God brings his teaching into line with what the mystics of East and West have said about resignation and the renunciation of all selfish personal desires and interests as being the first step in the spiritual path.

There is a very close resemblance in many respects between the religion of the Oxford Group and Indian Bhakti; and much of Mr. Kitchen's writing is reminiscent of *The Gospel of Ramakrishna*.

But, despite the undoubted fervour, devotion and sincerity of the Oxford Group, the system, like most Bhakti systems, is fatally weak on the intellectual side. It is not unfair to say that it simply takes the outline theology of Protestant Christianity for granted and has no philosophy otherwise. Its adherents, once converted, seem to rely entirely on what they call "guidance," i.e., on inner promptings, which they believe come from God; but they appear to have no criterion by which to distinguish impulses that come from above from those otherwise derived. Mr. Kitchen is convinced that he receives divine guidance in planning the detailed events of his daily life. God tells him what clients to call on and what to say to them. Now, while the general tenor and orientation of our lives should be determined by the promptings of the divine Higher Self, yet that Inner God does not concern itself with material details, which are the business of the ratiocinative mind.

The God sets the course : we have to do the steering and see to the efficiency of the ship. That Mr. Kitchen attributes so many of his impulses to divine guidance suggests inevitably that he does not distinguish between the divine and the human in himself ; and herein lies the great danger of his method. He himself is obviously a sincere and high principled man ; but many or most people, who come to

rely on " guidance " in the Oxford Group sense, would be apt to fall into the way of accepting every urge that wells up into consciousness as coming from God, with dire results to mental and moral health.

On its own merits and for the light it throws on a remarkable movement in contemporary religion, *I was a Pagan* deserves the attention of readers of THE ARYAN PATH.

R. A. V. M.

Science and God. By BERNHARD BAVINK. Trans. by H. Stafford Hatfield. (George Bell and Sons, Ltd., London 5s.)

Limitations of Science. By J. W. SULLIVAN. (Chatto and Windus, London)

The scientists of the seventeenth century, who are really the founders of modern thought, evolved a mechanistic picture of the world in terms of classical mechanics. These founders of science were men of great piety and had no intention to oppose the traditional Christianity. Subsequent developments during a period of three hundred years have turned European culture away from belief in God and all that goes with such faith, and have finally resulted in " simple unconcealed atheism and materialism which is to-day the official philosophy of Bolshevik Russia ".

Bernhard Bavink adds his testimony to the growing mass of evidence that a mere mechanistic view of matter is untenable. The modern physicist has learned that his " atoms or electrons or what not, are no longer to be regarded as rigid lumps of reality from which no path can be found into the mental and spiritual sphere ; he sees, on the contrary, that all those structures are forms in perpetual flux which are only of interest to him as regards their form ". With this view every variety of materialism is superseded.

Any candid enquiry into the why and wherefore of observed phenomena leads every scientist, be he physicist or biologist, to something inexplicable, something mysterious. This horizon, which limits our scientific vision may be growing more distant, but we must confess that the beyond passes human understanding. Dr. Bavink, theologian as well as scientist, holds that it is within the " ken " and is the " action " of some superhuman being which we call God, but this is speculation, not science. The fact remains, however, that the scientist has made hardly any progress in solving several vital problems of great moment. The relation between the body and mind, the physical and psychical, the origin of life, the great gap between life and death in spite of the identity of substance—these and many other issues have remained unexplained.

This thesis is admirably developed by Dr. Sullivan, who regards science not as formulation of truth but as the constant pursuit of truth ; dynamic rather than static. *Limitations of Science* presents the history of science as a record of the painstaking but never-ending endeavour of man to solve the riddles of nature, a history of knowledge ever growing but never complete. Generally speaking, while our curiosities about inanimate matter are to some extent satisfied by scientific enquiries, our knowledge concerning life is still far from satisfactory. It may be that our interest in phenom-

ena connected with inanimate matter is limited, but it can be said without hesitation that in every department of enquiry we are confronted with unsolved or unsatisfactorily solved problems. Our attempts at the formulation of the laws of probability stand out as confessions of our limitations.

The chapter on scientific philosophy is most appealing to the Oriental mind. When the enquiring mind attempts to probe into the significance of facts as perceived by the sciences, to sift out the important facts suitable for scientific formulation from others which are either trivial or illusory and to comprehend Nature as a whole and not as a special department of it, the limiting features of our existing knowledge confront us at every stage. The

search for significance and the assessment and valuation of facts involve considerations of a highly personal character, subjective and not objective, and thus constitute a fresh limitation of science.

Has Sir S. Radhakrishnan suggested the solution? He has said :—

Man's never ceasing effort to read the riddle of the Sphinx and raise himself above the level of the beast to a moral and spiritual height finds a striking illustration in India. The problem of Indian Philosophy to-day is whether it is to be reduced to a cult restricted in scope and with no application to the present facts or whether it is to be made alive and real so as to become what it should be, one of the great formative elements in human progress by relating the immensely increased knowledge of modern science to the ancient ideals of Indian Philosophy.

B. N. SASTRI

Stories of Second Sight in a Highland Regiment. BY WILLIAM KIRK. (Eneas Mackay, Stirling, Scotland. 2s. 6d..)

These stories are not records of cases of second sight in a Highland Regiment, but short tales and poems written for the war-time gazette of a Highland Regiment. Not all of them deal with "queer" things, but those that do were founded on fact—the author's own experiences and those of his fellow-soldiers.

There is to-day a definite demand for tales of "ghasties and ghoulies" and an oncoming curiosity about abnormal faculties. Whether such literature is wholesome diet is another matter. When put out merely as hair-raising thrillers, such fiction accustoms people's minds to the idea of an inner psychic world, and thereby helps to force their own psychic development and to bring them, through the magnetic attraction of their interest in the

subject, into a condition where they are more easily affected by psychic forces. Scepticism is a measure of protection, and when it vanishes, leaving only ignorance behind, the last state is worse than the first.

Since Mr. Kirk has recognized empirically such faculties as clairvoyance and second sight he has some basis for the theoretical study that must precede practical investigation, if the latter is to be carried on in safety. Madame Blavatsky gave many a warning about the coming development of psychism with all its allurements and dangers, and the vital need for proper knowledge and control of such powers. We can see to-day how even fiction writers have a responsibility in the matter. Are their stories helping to arouse interest in psychism without giving at the same time any means of dealing with the difficulties that will arise from that interest?

WINIFRED WHITEMAN

The Word to Peter. By J. A. HEATON. (Elliot Stock, London. 3s.)

The author, in this account of Peter's training and preaching, attempts to show along what lines a real religion of living, individual and collective, may be formulated. He believes there are "pieces of truth in many sects," but that the full glory of Christianity will be revealed when the sects are dissolved in the Christ-Homo. And that alone can regenerate the present Satan-Homo of the modern world. He rightly opines that truth has largely outgrown the age of creeds and that their bonds are superseded. He pleads for creedlessness and non-sectarianism in the faiths of the future which he sees as Christianity stripped of Churchianity.

He pleads, too, for the removal of Bibliolatry that has impeded the growth of Christianity. Very truly he says that the Bible has been misunderstood.

The Book of Scientific Discovery. BY D. M. TURNER, PH. D. (George G. Harrap & Co., Ltd., London. 7s. 6d.)

In this volume an attempt has been made to show how some of our present scientific knowledge has grown. The treatment is historical, with a narration of conditions in which some of the pioneers in the field of scientific discovery had to work. The theodolite has been set to work out only a general topography of a vast and varied field. Yet it presents a view of scientific tradition and evolution which is broad, plain, varied and compact.

Whilst there is no question as to the value and interest of a book of this kind, there are some postulates and conclusions as to the nature and value of modern scientific knowledge which may be open to question. Modern science may appropriately be said to have begun with Roger Bacon, Leonardo, Kepler, Galileo, Harvey, and others. Its method has been as remarkable as its discoveries. But it would be hardly just to claim that these are quite "new," and the past had no idea of

This misunderstanding is the cause of non-progress and decay; but the wider interpretation of the Bible which alone can save Christianity from its oncoming doom, is possible only by the aid of Western science and Eastern wisdom. This has been done remarkably in our opinion by Madame Blavatsky, and every Christian should peruse her writings.

We cannot, however, agree with the author that Christianity alone can fuse the nations into one. No single religion can do so. The Secret Doctrine of all religions—the Universal religion of which all religions are partial expressions—which yet is latent in each, can alone unite the world. The book betrays the author's ignorance of other religions. Such narrow views will be outgrown if he makes a comparative study of Indian Religions.

SWAMI JAGADISWARANANDA

them. The past sought the one indivisible Truth through its own approaches while modern science has been seeking it through others. The spirit and method and range of ancient science may have been different from those of modern science, and its results may have been recorded in a language which we do not quite understand and which even the middle ages did not quite understand. But this does not mean that it was all nonsense or superstition. The "New Outlook" in Modern Science is showing that there is a background of truth in some ancient "superstitions" (e.g., alchemy) which had long been supposed definitely exploded.

As to the question how Science has aided human welfare, the concluding chapter of the book presents a fairly just balance sheet of the real assets and liabilities of our current scientific business; still the position "that as a body of knowledge, science is perfectly neutral" would appear to be maintainable only in a morally and spiritually perfected world.

PRAMATHANATH MUKHOPADHYAYA

History and the Self. By HILDA D. OAKELEY, M. A., D. LITT. (Williams & Norgate, Ltd., London. 10s. 6d.)

In this new work, the author widens the thesis of her *Study in the Philosophy of Personality*, and at the same time directs thought to the primal sources of history. In that she is not original. Carlyle said "In a certain sense all men are historians," and on another occasion "History is the essence of innumerable Biographies," thereby succinctly adumbrating the argument here so capably and so modernly discussed, which by its trenchancy supplies an irrefutable answer to Joseph Butler's question in his essay "Upon Human Nature,"—"Why should we be concerned with anything out of and beyond ourselves?"

It is therefore all to the good that these young explorers into cause and effect, that these dissecting surgeons of the pen, should remove shibboleths of which precise thought is well rid.

The place of personality in history is undoubted, and history has its action upon the individual. The Cecils never forget their forebears, and this historical memory has definite effect upon their movements to-day. This thought the author advances (p. 147) in speaking of India:—

A Rajput chief would introduce himself by naming clan and branch, family and lineage, going back to an eponymous ancestor. The question of the state to which he belonged would be a far less important matter. Here the historical thread is all-in-all.....the relation of the self to historic development, the value of the higher experience is potentially present wherever there are selves conscious of each other as selves. Here there is the capacity for free and self-originating activity.

In contrast to Cicero's dictum (*De Oratore*) that "history is the light of truth," the author asserts (p. 89) "It has been admitted that the ideal of truth in history cannot be realized," following this, as if remembering Carlyle's "innumerable biographies," with "but there is a great range of knowledge which is historical in a secondary

sense taking the form of a panorama of persons and events," which "the individual subject contemplating history interprets on the basis and by means of the forms and qualities of his own experience". Thus is explained the assertion in the introduction that "Historic reality is in the primary field of human experience," and it is further developed in the domain of ethics by—

It would appear to be of the first importance that we should approach the problems of the practical life with its values that are universal in all forms of experience from the historical standpoint. By this it is meant that the good for the individual is his good as member of the long historical process. The nature of his ideal, therefore, as well as the true significance of his activities, their scope and limitations, will not be understood without realization of the nature of his relation to events, the tendencies of his development in history, the problem of changes in values from age to age and its bearing upon that principle of absolute value of which the greatest moral teachers seem to have been conscious.

It has indeed been held that in view of the brevity of life and the enormous burden which is laid upon each individual by the past out of whose influences he can with difficulty raise himself, as also the ever repeated failures of past struggles for permanently nobler forms of existence, the best hope of new creative movement in ethics lies in an ignoring of the past so far as possible... History cannot be forgotten since the self, its activities, the question whether they can achieve any real change or creative action, are all bound up with the actuality of history, which is only actual for selves. If we deny the significance of history we deny the significance of selves. (pp. 157-8)

To this is added.—

History exists for us because the men and women of the past, like ourselves, have continually worked in events under some particular idea of what is good, though they may not have been aware of this meaning in their actions, and though their springs of action may often seem to us contrary to the good. (p. 158)

The thoughtful will find in this work much to contemplate in regard to the power of the self in the forming of what is popularly known as "history". Increasingly the individual is becoming significant: Roosevelt, Mussolini, Hitler, Gandhi. Therefore this work is both timely and salutary.

WILLIAM H. STEER

The World's Great Sermons. Selected with an Introduction, by SIDNEY DARK. (Arthur Barker Ltd., London. 8s. 6d.)

Mr. Dark has chosen a misleading title for this book. It may be that he confuses the World with Christendom, or else that he does not consider any sermon of Pagan origin worthy of being called a great sermon, but the fact remains that this volume is not what it declares itself to be. A more correct title would have been *The Great Sermons of Christendom*, for since it contains none of the discourses of Socrates (some of which might well be classed as sermons), the Buddha or Sri Krishna, it has little claim to represent the great preachers of the world. But as a collection of Christian sermons it is in many ways an admirable book, covering as it does so many shades of belief, ranging from St. Leo the Great to Charles Spurgeon, the eminent Baptist preacher of the last century. As a symposium of the many forms of Christian doctrine it is a work of considerable value, and it only fails in so far as Christianity as a whole fails to give a satisfactory answer to the problems of life. However, since the aim of this book is to affirm the common goal of Christian endeavour, and since the compiler might have taken for his motto the saying which appears on its cover, that we are right in what we affirm and wrong in what we deny, it would seem better to dwell rather upon its spiritual achievements than on the shortcomings of Christianity as a whole.

One of the most important sermons that Mr. Dark has chosen is that of St. Clement of Alexandria on "The Rich Man's Salvation," which might be regarded as a perfect answer to the accusation of Nietzsche that Christianity is a religion solely for weak spirits, paupers and outcasts. St. Clement

declares that Christ's precept to be rid of one's possessions—

does not refer to the visible act...but to something else greater,...which is signified through this; namely, to strip the soul itself and the will of their lurking passions and utterly to root out and cast away all alien thoughts from the mind....The men of former days, indeed, in their contempt for outward things, parted with and sacrificed their possessions, but as for the passions of the soul, I think they even intensified them....He who has cast away his worldly abundance can still be rich in passions.

Such sayings will find answering chords in many of the Eastern scriptures.

If this collection is a little marred by the insistence of Spurgeon and Pusey on Hell and Damnation, its blemishes are cast into the shadows by many sermons of vital beauty, among which may be numbered Phillips Brooks's discourse on the text, "The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord". "Man must be something that he may be nothing. The something which he must be must consist in simple fitness to utter the divine life which is the only original power in universe." Again there is Lacordaire's remarkable study of the character of Jesus, St. John Chrysostom's moving account of the "Dread Tribunal" at Antioch, and Newman's exhortation to be rid of argument and disputation, to work while there is day, "to advance and sanctify the inward man". For these and several others—Luther, Donne, Fénelon and Chalmers—this book is well worth the study of those who would know what Christianity is as conceived by some of the greatest minds in European history, and there need be no hesitation in saying that those whose experience of Christianity has been solely a barren "Churchianity," which so often passes for the teaching of Christ, will turn from this book with a far higher opinion of their religion.

ALAN W. WATTS

THE FIRST QUARTER OF 1934 IN THE U. S. A.

*Eternal Issues and a Civilized Minority—Music in New York—
American Philosophical Association—Liberalism, Communism
and Classical Religion—Scholars and Comparative Study of
Religions.*

[Professor Irwin Edman in his quarterly survey remarks (1) that American philosophers are recognizing that political and social problems and events have a spiritual dimension and (2) that American youths are seeking some coherent sense of ultimate standards of conduct and the place of values in Nature. Next month we will publish "Spiritual Values of Contemporary America," by C. E. M. Joad, who visited the States in the same period of which Professor Edman writes.—EDS.]

Discussion continues, of course, to centre upon the economic crisis, even in quarters where a few years ago a "planned society" and the gold standard would have been unknown terms. The threat to peace in Europe and the intransigence of both left and right wing movements all over the world continue, on the surface, to usurp the attention of all thinking men. Issues, moreover, quite removed from any surface political aspect, are increasingly being discussed in politico-economic terms. Even the spirit wavers when confronted with the picture of twelve million unemployed, and the peace and solitude requisite to mysticism or meditation are not easy in a nation undergoing social changes both obvious and profound.

Yet the eternal issues that lie deeper than machinery of government and that will outlast any economic order, continue to pre-occupy and win the attention of the civilized minority, an ever-growing one, in this metropolis of the western world. One seems never to have noted more signs in more directions of the interest of a

larger number of people in the life of imagination and thought. One reason for this is, as a matter of fact, the consequence of the so-called New Deal in American Politics. Under the provisions of the codes for Industry established by the National Industrial Recovery Act, the shorter work day has provided, and promises to provide in the future, even more leisure. Educators and leaders of civic life have been concerned with the use of the new leisure thus created. Adult education, a recent development in America, has assumed large proportions. And there is one group in New York, consisting largely of working people who come every Wednesday of the winter to discuss Aristotle's logic with a university professor. This in 1934 near a railway terminal in downtown New York. These are attended not merely by those with extra leisure but those unemployed. And it is striking that it is not only courses in economics and politics that are attended, nor books on those subjects that are in demand in the libraries. The New York Public, I am informed by one of its educa-

tional directors, has an increasing demand largely by young people for books that will give them some coherent sense of ultimate standards of conduct, their place in life, and the place of values in Nature. And it is not without significance that two months before publication there has been a demand, unprecedented in the history of American publishing, for Dickens's only recently released simple and touching story of Jesus written originally for his children under the title *The Life of Our Lord*.

Since my last letter I have nothing to report of any special distinction in the theatre in the way of new dimensions or enlarged themes. One continues to be struck by the wide devotion of an always increasing and increasingly discriminating public to music of the first order. The connection of the life of the spirit with its mechanical and material conditions cannot more admirably be illustrated than by the broadcasting of the concerts of the New York Philharmonic Symphony Concerts under Arturo Toscanini from coast to coast and over the whole Canadian network. It has been estimated that one Sunday afternoon recently, there must have been over ten million people listening to a meticulous and dedicated performance of Beethoven's "Missa Solennis". The actual performance, at which this correspondent was present, was a marvel of minute care and wide understanding on the part of the distinguished maestro and of all con-

cerned. The music has very seldom been heard in New York. The explanation is, I think, to be found in the music itself. It is not the best of Beethoven by a good deal, on purely musical grounds, for all the tenderness and clear beauty of the Agnus Dei. In point of spontaneous religious passion and altitude of feeling it compares very poorly with the Bach Mass in B Minor which had its annual New York performance by the Schola Cantorum before an audience larger than ever, who listened with something more than a mere concert goer's interest to that towering work of religious art given faithfully in its completeness.

If references to music occur frequently in these quarterly letters, it is because there is probably not a city in the world, and one might say, with the education by radio broadcasts, not a country in the world, where there is a larger and more discriminating musical public. And it is clear, from the response from all over the country to the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra's campaign for public support, that in a period where the spirit finds few avenues for solace, liberation or escape, the ministration and moral therapy of music has come to be regarded as one of the minimal necessities of American life, depression or no depression.

A good place to detect current winds of doctrine is at the annual meetings of the American Philosophical Association which take place directly after Christmas at one or another of the leading colleges

or universities, this year at Amherst, a hill-surrounded New England town, that is most famous as the home of the great American mystical poet, Emily Dickinson. A large part of the programme is inevitably devoted to technical issues in philosophy, and too often regrettably for their own technical sake. But there are always some hints and intimations of deeper and more genuinely serious things. The Presidential Address by Professor C.I. Lewis, the well known Harvard logician, was a critique of that philosophical cult, begun by the Viennese, Wittgenstein, which tries to reduce philosophy to a series of definitions, postulates, logical relations. He indicated with neatness the limitations of so purely an abstracted and abstractional philosophy. There was a charming and extremely illuminating paper, by Dr. Demos, also of Harvard, on the conception of Eros and the Psyche in Plato. Eros was Plato's way of speaking of, illustrating and defining the mortal creature passionately seeking and indirectly moving toward the ideal good, and love itself a way of describing the movement of matter to its goal in God or the motionless Good. Dr. Demos's paper will doubtless appear in print shortly, and will be of special interest to Platonists all over the world, especially to those who forget how much movement there is in Plato's conception of matter, and how the doctrine of love links the world of material change with the

immortal and unchanging world of ideal essence or idea.

Earlier in this letter, it was remarked how even issues not generally connected with politics or economics in the minds of those concerned with them have of late taken on the vocabulary of the pre-occupations of these troubled times. There has just been published a book by a well-known contemporary theologian, Reinhold Niebuhr of Union Theological Seminary, entitled *Reflections on the End of an Era*. Mr. Niebuhr, like all the rest of us, is genuinely perturbed by what he sees as the end of the relative security and clarities of the traditional bourgeois economy of the Western World. Politically, he has moved very far to the left. He regards liberalism as completely bankrupt both in its easy optimism about the future and its refusal to recognize the incorrigible greeds, lusts and corruptions of human nature. Communism, too, he insists, depends too much on a materialistic logic of history and a naïve faith in the ability of man to conquer the chaos of events and the conflicts of the self. He turns, therefore, where "classical" religion has always turned in the past, to the assurance of grace from the realm of God, the eternal and the absolute, in which all the defeats and frustrations of human nature are reconciled. This book* is not itself distinguished either in style or in

* A review of this volume by John Middleton Murry will appear in the next number of THE ARYAN PATH.—EDS.

profundity of thought. It makes too easy an attempt to reconcile the right wing in theology with the left wing in politics. It is provincial in its identification of "classical religion" with Christianity. There is, as readers of THE ARYAN PATH, especially those in India, scarcely need to be reminded, a classicism in religion that antedated and in the opinion of many transcends the "classicism of Christianity". But there is genuine significance in Professor Niebuhr's book. *It makes it clear that current theologians and philosophers in America are recognizing that political and social problems have a spiritual dimension, that in the long run it is the good life that matters, and that considerations of the good life lead us inevitably to those ultimate grapplings with ultimate things which we call philosophy and religion.*

In the last quarterly letter from this part of the world, it was intimated that there is at Columbia University a very extensive project in the scholarly study of religion from a non-partisan and non-theological standpoint. The general programme is under the direction of Professor Herbert W. Schneider, Professor of Religion. It includes courses and research projects in the philosophy, ethnology and psychology of religion, and involves the development

of a Museum and Library of Religion out of a large special fund, and the editing of a series of studies in "religion and culture," amongst which must be counted Salo Baron's monumental study of the history of the Jews soon to appear, *Religions in Various Cultures* by Friess and Schneider already published, a study of St. Paul by your correspondent, in preparation, and a study of Indian Buddhism by Professor G. Griswold. Most of these projects are furthered through the resources of the Schermerhorn Fund, a large special fund expressly bequeathed for the study of religion at the University. The Department of Religion has an active programme also of undergraduate and graduate courses and several research seminars.

The "Oxford" Movement (Buchmanism), with its evangelical enthusiasm, has come back from England to this country where some years ago it originated. It is attracting considerable comment, pro and con. There are those who are disdainful of its mixture of spirituality and sensationalism; others who find in it a revival of a genuine and living piety. A book called *I was a Pagan** by a well known advertising man, V. Kitchen, now an enthusiastic convert, has provoked such typical mingled comment.

IRWIN EDMAN

* Reviewed elsewhere in this issue. (p. 469)—EDS.

ENDS AND SAYINGS

“————— ends of verse
And sayings of philosophers.”

HUDIBRAS.

Magic, and especially black magic, formed a subject of discussion in the London papers because of a case brought into the English Courts of Law. Most of the numerous contributors showed ignorance or prejudice or both. Mr. E. F. Benson is an exception; his short article in *The Spectator* of 20th April deserves attention. We agree with him that magic is not the art by which miracles are performed (for there is no such thing as a miracle), and that with the increase of knowledge the universe expands. We welcome his words that “the dim tracts of the unknown which hold the key to the ultimate mysteries of human life are so vast that science has as yet explored only the narrowest margin”. We also agree with Mr. Benson that superstition about magic-rites prevails—and not only among illiterate orientalists as is generally believed; it also flourishes in fashionable drawing-rooms of “cultured” London, Paris and New York. The anglicized Indian who turns up his nose at the “dirty sadhu” and calls the genuine faquir a faker, and believes he has freed himself from such abject humbugs and charlatans often accepts with avidity “suggestions” of some occidental necromancer. We have known Indians who laughed at the Brahmana Jyotishi in India but who had their

horoscopes cast by European astrologers charging high fees! Again, they pooh-pooh the art of the street *jadoo-walla*, but pay a heavy price to some European hypnotist whose power and performance compare unfavourably with those of the *jadugar*!

But for all that we cannot accept Mr. Benson's theory and trace magic, both white and black, to the ignorance and superstition of early humanity. The root of the very words magic and magician tells a different tale. Magic was considered a divine science which led to a participation in the attributes of Divinity itself. “Magic consists of and is acquired by the worship of the Gods,” says Plato. “It unveils the operations of nature,” says Philo Judæus, “and leads to the contemplation of celestial powers.” Again, Proclus the Platonist ably puts it:—

Ancient priests, when they considered that there is a certain alliance and sympathy in natural things to each other, and of things manifest to occult powers, and discovered that all things subsist in all, fabricated a sacred science from the mutual sympathy and similarity—and applied for occult purposes, both celestial and terrene natures, by means of which through a certain similitude, they deduced divine virtues into this inferior abode.

We can multiply quotations from Greek and Roman philos-

ophers more learned in the magical lore than the modern psychical researchers. We can also quote from Chinese, Egyptian and Indian texts to prove that magic was a Science, with its theoretical and applied branches. To call it all the result of ignorance and superstition is sheer folly.

The modern scholar suffers from a twisted historical sense—it may be described as the straight line theory of history. He cannot give up the supposition that human evolution started in savagery ; nor can he conceive that earlier civilizations could be superior to the modern, if not in all at least in many respects , nor that the ancients could possess knowledge on subjects about which the modern universities have nought to say. When the modern schoolman studies ancient lore he evaluates the old-world wisdom with a conviction that he is fully capable of passing judgment on it. Thus modern philologists rate ancient philosophies ; modern scientists shrug their shoulders at ancient alchemy, ancient astrology and other branches of magic ; modern historians smile at ancient chronology. Modern scholars accept Plato when it suits them, but wink a doubtful eye when they come across in the *Timæus* the statement that “ the transactions of this our city of Sais, are recorded in our sacred writings during a period of 8000 years ”. They call Herodotus the father of history but refuse to consider his information that “ the Egyptians assert

that from the reign of Heracles to that of Amasis, 17,000 years elapsed ”. The labours of archæologists are tarnished by the obsessing influence of Archbishop Usher’s chronology, even though they no longer believe in the creation of the world in 4004 B. C. It is as absurd to hold that human evolution began with the single couple Adam and Eve, as to believe that savagery, and savagery alone, was the starting point of the human kingdom.

If men like Mr. E. F. Benson who believe in Magic but look upon it as rooted in superstition and ignorance were to adopt, at least as a working hypothesis, the view that sages and savages existed ever, that dynasties of Divine Rulers of child humanity are not a poetical fancy, that the rise and fall of civilizations betoken a cyclic progression, then they would also see the truth and the validity of the following propositions of oriental psycho-philosophy :—

Magic, as a science, is the knowledge of the way by which the omniscience and omnipotence of the spirit and its control over nature’s forces may be acquired by the individual while still in the body. Magic, as an art, is the application of this knowledge in practice.

Arcane knowledge misapplied is sorcery ; beneficently used, true Magic or Wisdom.

Races of men differ in spiritual gifts as in colour, stature, or any other external quality ; among some peoples seership naturally prevails, among others mediumship. Some races are addicted to sorcery, and transmit its secret rules of practice from generation to generation.

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